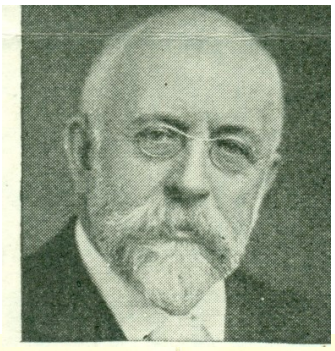
Owasippe the Camp

And other Chicago Council Camps

The Early Years 1912-1961



The A. STAMFORD WHITE

OWASIPPE SCOUT CAMPS, Inc.

OPENS JULY 1st

1,000 Acres of Wilderness

The Camps

Camp Dan Beard	For North Shore District Scouts
*Camp Blackhawk	For West Side District Scouts
*Camp Checaugau	For Northwest District Scouts
*Camp McDonald	For South Central and Southwest District Scouts
Camp James E. West	For South Shore and Calumet District Scouts
*Camp Belnap	For Douglas Division Scouts

Paul E. Myers, Jr.
Goshen, Indiana

About this book

This book is not authorized or approved by the Chicago Area Council or the Boy Scouts of America. The opinions expressed are solely those of the author.

I have worked on this booklet for over 15 years. Friends contacted me in 2010, urging me to complete "something" for the 2011 anniversary of Owasippe. Because I was unable to access documents that would allow me to complete the story to my satisfaction, I delayed.

In the summer of 2011, I finally discovered who R. Douglas Stuart was. In November of 2011 Ron Kulak sent an obituary of A. Stamford White, that allowed me to properly identify him as the President of the Chicago Board of Trade. I still lack information on the White River canoe trips and I can not include a map of Camp Dan Beard, despite the fact that one exists but with no additional information coming, its time to publish.

In a book like this, the reader will usually look to the section about their camp and see if I've captured any memories of their experience. Most will be disappointed, because this booklet about Owasippe is from a time that no one will remember. The photo studio and woodshop are long gone. There were no baseball diamonds or tennis courts at the Owasippe I knew. The modern camps don't have camp songs. Individual camp experiences can be so different. A full service campers from Blackhawk, Beard, Stuart or West will know nothing of Hiawatha Beach or Wilderness and vice versa. I never sat foot at any of the Crystal Lake camps, never saw the famous blockhouse at Camp Stuart and despite the fact we camped on Big Blue Lake for years I don't recall ever being in the Camp Blackhawk dining hall. We took canoe trips but we never hiked any of the Owasippe trails. We made a yearly trip to the eerie scene at the bottom of Paradise Valley just around the corner from Camp Hiawatha Beach but most Blackhawk campers probably never hiked around Big Blue Lake to this unique experience. Veteran Owasippe campers probably missed a large part of what Owasippe was, I hope that this book will show you things about our camps that you didn't know.

When this was first published I printed 250 copies and donated them t the Owasipe Staff Association. They sold them and kept the money to support their work at Owasippe.

August 2025. he book has been out of print for several years. I continually get calls from people wanting one. I found the original printing file and my business just recently bought a high speed color printed. THIS is the result of that. In many ways its better than the original. First color printing and the pages got jumbled up by the printer and this is a more readable version.

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Forward

In 1998, I developed a pamphlet which was to be a warm up for the larger project of writing the story of scouting in Chicago. Over the years, I've realized that the best way to proceed is by breaking the subject down into manageable parts. At this time, I've developed the story of Owasippe the Camp and Owasippe the Lodge.

I discovered that in the early years, most scouts did not attend camp with home unit leadership; scouts camped by district and the camps were district camps. Research into the districts was needed and an explanation of districts became necessary. I discovered that the original camp on Crystal Lake was for the North Shore District and that raised the question of where other early districts camped. Modern scouters have never heard of Camp Keesus, Shabbona, Ken Jockety, Wabash or Yotanka, so even though the booklet is about Owasippe, I included information on these camps as well as later district camps.

Understanding Owasippe was like putting a complicated jig saw puzzle together. You can't proceed until you've got other parts of the puzzle. There were so many ways to get things wrong. There were different Camp Pioneers and the camps have nothing to do with the work crews called Pioneers. No one realized that Camp Blackhawk was named Pioneer for a few years. Camps named Wilderness and Pioneer moved from the north side of Big Blue Lake to the south side and Pioneer later moved north again. The boundaries of the 1935 districts are unknown to modern scouters. The geographic descriptions seem clear enough; South Shore, South West, West Side, North West, North Shore. It would appear that the North West District was probably the area on the northwest side of the city; the Norwood Park or Edison neighborhoods. When I discovered a map (page 78) I realized that the North West District was actually north of the West District in the Albany Park, Lakeview, Logan Square and Irving Park neighborhoods. Assumptions that I had developed about the Northwest Suburban Council growing out of the North West District had been wrong. But, the mistake would have been an easy one to make.

I would have liked to have told the whole Owasippe Story, 1912-2012 but the research material was just not available. I hope that someone will pick up where I've left off and develop the story of the later years.

I regret that a project of this type wasn't started years ago. Unfortunately, there is no depository for historic information about camp or for that matter Scouting in Chicago. The usual sources, Scout Headquarters, the Chicago Public Library, Chicago Historical Society and elsewhere just didn't have any useful information. I couldn't accept the fact that the Chicago Historical Society didn't have anything. It was my belief that a treasure trove of information should exist at the Owasippe Museum. Dozens of individuals told me they gave memorabilia to Owasippe, but there is very little of historic significance at the Owasippe Museum.

Paul E. Myers, Jr.
Trailblazer District, Eagle Scout Class of 1962
Silver Beaver, Northern Indiana Council 1983
Goshen, Indiana 2012

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I wanted to tell the Owasippe story with a factual account about the camp, what the campers did, how the camps operated, how things changed. I tried contacting veteran Chicago scouters. I mailed requests for help to Eagles, Silver Beavers, Vigils, etc; I interviewed old timers and recorded recollections. I ended up with a lot of interesting miscellaneous information; the summer of 1956 was hot, the water in Big Blue was cold, we used to play tricks on first year campers, etc. Occasionally I'd get some facts, but I realized that much of my earlier work was full of inaccuracies. Personal recollections make for interesting antidotal information, but are not history.

I purchased a grouping of Owasippe camp promotion booklets from 1919 through the 1950's which came from the Camp Yorkville dumpster. Without the information in these pamphlets, I would have never started the project. John Kennedy gave me a 1935 camp insurance booklet that had photos of every insured structure at Owasippe circa 1935. Lee Marks shared information on districts and some early photos. Steve Rice shared images of the program hides and a document that allowed me to understand the neighborhood make up of the districts. In 2011, Ron Kulak introduced me to Jim Schlichting who lives in Whitehall, MI. and we visited Crystal Lake. Jim did some great research using the Whitehall newspapers to document events about Owasippe. He shared his manuscript and I am grateful, but I wish that we had made each others acquaintance earlier. By the time we met I was so far along with my research. Ultimately in the final editing Jim's time line was a resource for fact checking. I found a book on E Bay, 13 Years of Scout Adventure by Stuart Walsh. The book has information about the earliest Chicago troops and information on events and activities, pre-1920. I've been accumulating copies of old council publications and have a library of Chicago Council and District papers, dating back to 1915. I have a library of national BSA publications; Annual Reports to Congress, Scouting Magazine, Scout Executive Magazine, etc. When I wanted to know what happened in 1926, I checked the 1926 Owasippe promotional booklets, the 1926 campers manual and the twelve issues of Scoutcraft from 1926. When I was curious about the Scout Executive transition in 1927, I read The Scout Executive Magazine for transfer dates. I checked Scoutcraft to see what was said about the transition. Instead of going to the library to look up facts I went to my basement, dining room table or sunroom. We've made numerous visits to Owasippe. In November 2011 as I was completing the final editing, Ron Kulak shared the obituary of A. Stamford White. White is identified as the President of the Chicago Board of Trade. In the 1965 White Laker, published for the dedication of the new camps at Owasippe, A. Stamford White was identified as a famous architect. I had accepted the architect occupation as factual. A famous architect named A. Stamford White is on the web and I assumed that was "our" man. Discovering A. Stamford White as the President of the Chicago Board of Trade, explained everything. Owasippe was built by funds from the Board of Trade. White was Council President and Board of Trade President. He was not an architect, forty five years of misconceptions were corrected. It was White who visited the site in 1910. It was White, as Council President who agreed to purchase land. It was White as President of the Chicago Board of Trade financed the construction in 1913. A. Stamford White was the founder and benefactor of Owasippe, yet he was nearly unknown in 1965 and is still unknown in 2012.

An Overview of Chicago Boy Scout Summer Camping

Scouting burst onto the scene in Chicago. Even before the BSA was incorporated, dozens of troops had formed. The Chicago Council was one of the first councils, charted in 1910. Chicago was the third largest city in the country and by the mid 1920's would be the largest BSA council. Almost immediately it was recognized that membership would be huge and the Chicago Council chose a form of decentralized management. Rather than a central office directing operations in the neighborhoods, neighborhood districts were established. Districts were allowed to form in any community that could develop leadership to handle operations. In 1913 the BSA developed the idea of dues and by 1914 paid professionals were employed. The neighborhood districts were combined into larger districts that could support a paid professional. Successful volunteer Scoutmasters became paid part time Commissioners or full time Executives. District offices were located around the city and the scouting professionals lived in the neighborhoods.

The volume of boys wishing to attend summer camp created a logistical problem. There was no single facility capable of handling the volume in the brief summer camp time frame. The task of providing summer camp fell to the individual districts. Districts and sometimes combinations of districts operated camps well into the mid-1920's. It was recognized that the area near Whitehall, Michigan had the best potential and funds were invested in property and buildings. By 1922 three separate camps were open but not all districts had sites at Owasippe. In 1926 all Chicago districts had camps at Owasippe, although smaller districts sometimes shared a camp for separate weeks. With the exception of Camp Checaugau, when the districts relocated their camps to Owasippe, new names were adopted.

In the early years, Chicago had the largest and most extensive camping program in the country. The Scout Executive (5/1921) reported that in 1920, 2,632 Chicago Scouts had camped from three to eight days. Chicago Council Executive, Louis L. McDonald was selected for the new position of National Director of Camping.

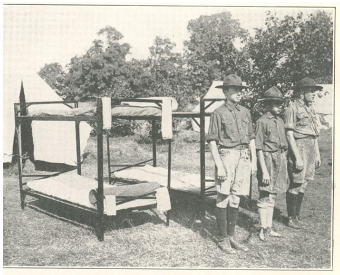
Scout summer camping in the Chicago Council can be divided into several periods. There were the great days, 1914 through 1927, when the sky was the limit and seemingly endless funds were poured into Owasippe for new camps and improvements. There was the period during the depression of the 1930's; families were hurting financially, and the expense of sending a boy to camp had to be minimal. It was during this period that Owasippe began struggling. Camps were built, the infrastructure was in place and the Owasippe camps needed to be nearly full just to break even. The difficult decisions were made by new Scout Executive, Perry Lint, and in 1932 cuts started happening. The camps at Owasippe on Big Blue were closed and Camp Kiwanis near the city was pressed into service as a summer camp. During the depression other camps in close proximity to the city served as summer camps: Harrison, Kiwanis, Doddridge even Ft. Dearborn. The depression subsided when the USA entered WW II (1941) but shortages of supplies and manpower brought their own difficulties. Plans for camp in 1942 at Owasippe were delayed to the last minute pending government approval of transportation. During the war years, Scouts had to bring their food ration cards to camp. After the war, the economy exploded and the Chicago Council had plans to double membership. In 1948 district operations expanded from six districts to twenty four, yet little was done to expand or improve Owasippe. If membership was going to double after 1948 why weren't improvements planned for Owasippe? A camp capital campaign was started in 1960 and at that time the promotion literature stated that *new camps were needed to replace the worn-out and obsolete camps at Owasippe.* But, it is a mystery why the camps were allowed to become worn out and obsolete.

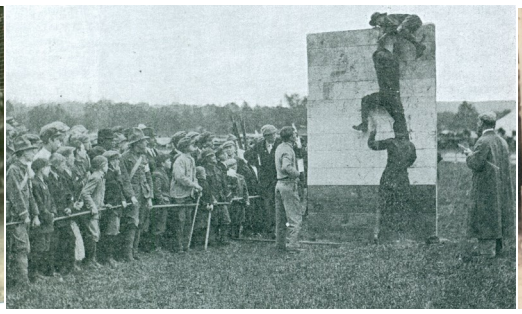
The formation of Boy Scout summer camping, Chicago leads the way

One of the features of modern Boy Scout camping is the uniformity of the experience. A Scout attending summer camp in California will have about the same experience as one attending camp in New York. Because of the BSA Engineering Department, the camp buildings may even be similar and the camps will have been inspected using the same criteria for program, health and safety. Pioneering Scout leaders were on their own when it came to summer camp. The first camps were troop sponsored, some operating under primitive conditions. Camps with innovative leadership were successful, but the experience at poor camps could be a catastrophe. Council leaders were concerned about how a bad experience could affect morale. As early as 1913, the Chicago Council was organizing into Districts, and it became the Districts responsibility to provide scouts with a quality summer camp experience. As the Districts employed professionals, experienced Scoutmasters became the Executives. By 1914, troops were discouraged from holding summer camps and had to get approval for camps outside the jurisdiction of their district camps.

Even under capable leadership the problem remained; what was Boy Scout camping and how was it organized? The early pioneering youth groups; YMCA, Woodcraft Indians, Son's of Daniel Boone etc, allowed boys to function as individuals. There was adult leadership, but the boys were often on their own. If boys could attend YMCA or Boys Club as individuals, scouts could attend camp on their own. As Scouting grew, more emphasis was placed on home unit leadership, but scouts attended Dan Beard's famous Bear Mountain Camp or Culver Woodcraft Camp as well as Owasippe without home unit leadership.

The program in early camps had to be developed. The handbook had information on knots, camp craft, cooking, etc. but what do you do with boys in camp for two weeks without making it a school? You'd want a location near water. Campers would want aquatic activities, but most would be non-swimmers and swimming instruction would be necessary. Boats would be a plus. Camp Owasippe had a fully equipped wood shop and photo studio in 1914, but as Scouting evolved these were not summer camp activities. Health and safety was a concern and how do you feed a hundred plus scouts in a wilderness? Pioneer scouting leaders faced these questions and many of the answers came out of programs developed at Owasippe.





In the early years, scouts couldn't work on merit badges until they were First Class and tenure requirements discouraged Scouts from advancing in rank at summer camp. Rank achievement was not promoted in camp as much as in later years. There was competition in everything. Every game or contest had a winner and loser, always with recognition for the winners. Camp had a parade grounds and it was widely used for marching and drills. Inspections were rigorous affairs carried out in a military manner. There were sports and contests. West Side District boxers captured the camp boxing titles, three of the five weeks in 1919. West Side District camper "Chubby" Charles Worth won the popularity contest on stunt night. Milton Scheyer was selected as the most handsome boy in camp, fourth period of 1919. There was more emphasis on camp wide events: Circuses, Water Carnivals, Barbecues, Treasure Hunts, Beauty Contests, etc. As I say several times throughout this text, things were very different in the earliest days and it's partially because leaders were experimenting to discover what Boy Scout camping should be.

The Owasippe Way of Scout Summer Camping

Owasippe was the earliest camp to have two hundred plus boys for a two week period, and the programs developed at Owasippe became the standard for other camps. From the earliest years, Owasippe had reserved the last week of summer camp for Scout leader training. Leaders from all over the country camped at Owasippe; things they saw and learned were carried back to their home units and councils.

Because of the generosity of Chicago businessmen, Owasippe had facilities that other camps did not. Dining Halls were a luxury that didn't come to many camps until years later. Other large camps used the patrol method for food preparation because they didn't have a dining hall, campers slept on the ground in tents belonging to their troops. Other camps had waterfronts, hiking and advancement but Owasippe campers took their meals in a splendid dining hall,

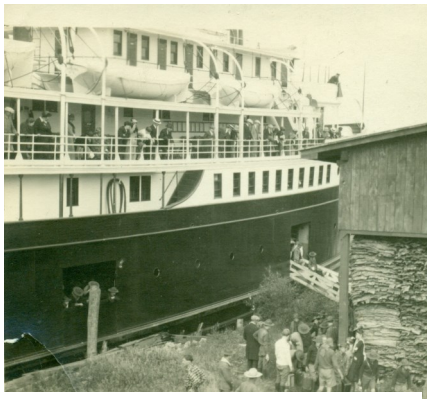
prepared by restaurant quality chefs and slept on spring beds in tents with elevated floors. Other camps pressed attending Scoutmasters and older boys into providing program, and if they had capable leaders they had good program. Owasippe had a paid staff of instructors and often the same individuals were on staff year after year. I've developed the term, the *Owasippe Way* to describe this method of camping. Again, the *Owasippe Way* is prepared meals, served in a dining hall, comfortable accommodations with scouts sleeping on spring beds in a tent with an elevated floor and program instruction provided by paid staff that had experience in the topic taught. Even lone troop camps like Wilderness and Hiawatha Beach had tents with elevated floors, spring beds and in later years, dining halls. I can not overemphasis this point about the *Owasippe Way*.

An Owasippe camper from the 1920's could return years later with his son and find that little had changed. A man could return with his grandson many years later and find that the only major change was that Camp McDonald was renamed Camp Stuart. There were few changes at the Crystal Lake camps after 1926. Money was spent to develop the Big Blue camps in the mid-1920's, but from 1928 through 1960 very little changed at Owasippe. One of the results was that traditions were transferred from scouting generation to generation. Our troop carved a bar each year in 1959-60-61 & 62 and hung it on our troop plaque that former members had carved in 1936. Scouts became Scoutmasters and it was assumed that they would return to their beloved camp. By the end of each season, every boy would know the camp song. With the Crystal Lake camps overflowing, Camp Blackhawk became a full service camp that developed traditions of it's own.

Scouting professionals would encourage more troop camping, and financial conditions would make it difficult for some boys to afford camp. Many scouts missed a summer camp opportunity because of the (expensive) traditions at the full service camps, but tens of thousands did experience it and 80 year old men can still sing the camp songs even through they haven't been at camp for 65 years.

Over the years, attempts were made to expand the types of camps at Owasippe. Lone troop camps at Pioneer and Wilderness were developed. Adventure and older scout camps were experimented with and Sea Scouts had their own camp at Sailors Cove on Big Blue Lake. The Crystal Lake camps had two hundred and occasionally three hundred campers for each period and Blackhawk often had two hundred. Ten or fifteen troops might camp at Hiawatha Beach, Pioneer or Wilderness, but the majority of campers went to Beard, West & McDonald/Stuart and after 1948, Blackhawk. Probably eighty percent of the scouts that ever camped at Owasippe 1914 to 1961 experienced the *Owasippe Way* at one of the Crystal Lake Camps or Blackhawk.

Getting to Camp



In the earliest years there was lake transportation between Chicago and the port cities of Michigan. Scouts would embark at Navy Pier and land at Whitehall, MI. on White Lake, just a short hike to the camps on Crystal Lake. What an adventure. A trip on a ship with passage to a magical place.

These 1917 photos shows Scouts unloading at White Lake and hiking through Whitehall, Michigan.

1959

After the lake steamers declined, transportation became more difficult. In 1928 special scout trains departed Union Station (downtown) and ran between the city and Owasippe. Boys and gear were transported to the camps by trucks. The scout trains ran to about 1963. Before the modern super highways, car or bus transportation from the city was a long tedious trip. You took highway 12-20 (95th St. in Chicago) around the top of Indiana and into Michigan, then north on the Red and Blue Arrow Highway, driving through dozens of communities along the way. A good trip without vehicle trouble could take 6-8 hours. In Thirteen Years of Scouting Adventure, (1923) Stuart Walsh tells of a two day trip by car traveling around the bottom of Lake Michigan to camp. Break downs and road problems made the trip, an "adventure." Even with the new interstate highways in the '60's, it could be a four hour trip by car.

In the Beginning

During the summer of 1910 a group of Chicago businessmen/scouters visited Whitehall, Michigan to examine a choir camp and investigate the potential for a camp for the North Shore District. The leader of the group was A. Stamford White, Chicago Council President. The men found a site on Crystal Lake, four miles east of town. The Whitehall City Council donated forty acres with the committee agreeing to purchase an additional 80 acres. In 1911, a group of scouts and workmen went to Crystal Lake to brush out a campsite, dig a well and erect a mess tent. On July 28th, 1912 one hundred eight scouts boarded a Lake Michigan steamer for the first week at the new camp.

The leaders of the council had been wrestling with what Boy Scout summer camping should be and how the council could assure a quality experience. The potential of the site was recognized as something extraordinary. The property was on a hill with beautiful vistas of the lake. The lake was small but with plenty of room for waterfront activities and scouts wouldn't get lost. Lake property was inexpensive and there were thousands of undeveloped acres adjoining the property. Lake Michigan steamers made regular summer crossings, and the property was just a few miles from the landing. Scouts could hike to camp and equipment could be easily transported the few miles to camp. Whitehall, Michigan was a resort community and civic leaders grasped the significance of hundreds of scouts camping just outside town. Visiting parents would need lodging and food. The camp would need provisions and there would be jobs. The town donated land and the scouter/businessman agreed to purchase more. Crystal Lake was the perfect site for a Scout camp.

There are no records of activities in 1912, but it must have been primitive. During this era the camp was primarily for Scouts of the North Shore District and other district camps were being developed. Men from the Chicago Board of Trade donated funds to construct a dining hall and kitchen capable of feeding two hundred scouts in one sitting. Funds were later acquired for a handicraft lodge, nature center, camp office, woodworking shop and a photo studio. These facilities at Owasippe made it something extraordinary and unique from other early camps.

The Whitehall Forum (newspaper) on 6/28/1912 reports *that a big white circus tent was erected on the camp grounds to serve as the mess hall. The chefs cooking shanty was the first permanent building erected. The first transportation to camp was aboard the S.S. Carolina. Boarded in the Chicago River and sat sail at 8 AM to cross Lake Michigan and arrive at the Colby Dock in Whitehall at 5:00 PM. The 100 campers then had a 3.5 mile hike to camp. They marched with bugles blaring and drums beating while merchants and residents waved a friendly greeting. 8/1912 A total of 839 campers, leaders and visitors attended. 235 stayed one week, the rest two.* (Thanks Jim Schlichting)

This is the earliest known post card from the camp that would become Owasippe. It was mailed on August 12, 1913, The camp is not named, the inscription is simply Flag Raising at Boy Scout camp Whitehall, Michigan. The newspaper account from 1912, above stated that the scouts marched through Whitehall with bugles blaring and drums beating. The members of the band in the photo are not in scout uniform, but were perhaps scouts.

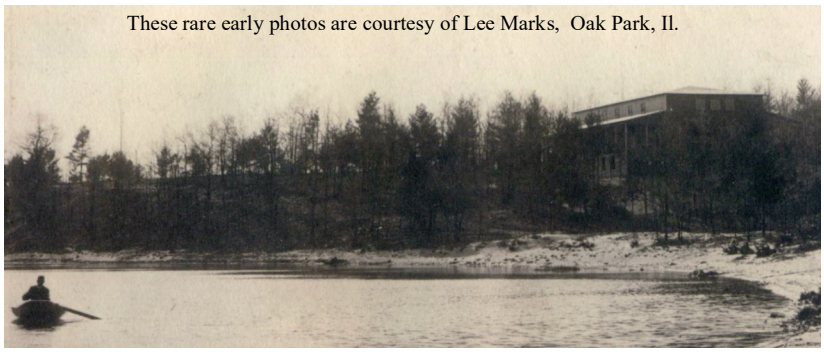
Photo courtesy Lee Marks

1913 The Dining Hall, Camp Construction & Amenities

Owasippe started the way all early Boy Scout camps began. Property was identified and acquired. Wells were dug, camp sites cleared, a few boats were borrowed or bought and scouts began camping. But something unusual happened that didn't occur elsewhere. Chicago businessmen embraced the camp and funds were collected for structures that would make Owasippe the showplace of scout camping in the earliest years and for years to come.

The size of the dining hall is estimated to be 150' x 50'. There was nothing like it in early scouting, or even in later years, except for newer dining halls at other Owasippe camps. Most camps didn't have dining halls until the late 1920's.

These rare early photos are courtesy of Lee Marks, Oak Park, Il.



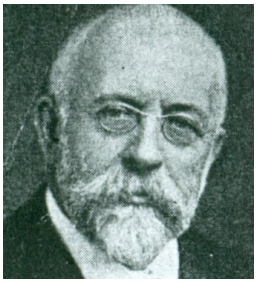
Before other structures were built, the dining hall served as a multi-purpose building for instruction.
Towering 40 feet above Crystal Lake, the original dining hall was a landmark visible from anywhere on the lake.

It can not be overstated that there was simply nothing like the camps at Owasippe in the early years. The New York City Councils had individual camps in different locations for the Bronx, Brooklyn, and Manhattan, etc. The famous Philadelphia camp, Treasure Island didn't have a dining hall until 1926. Owasippe had large, modern facilities as early as 1913. In 1914 Owasippe added a complete wood working shop and photo studio with running water for developing film. Tennis courts and baseball diamonds were also developed. In the early years these opportunities were part of what made Owasippe such an attraction. No other Boy Scout camp had anything like it.

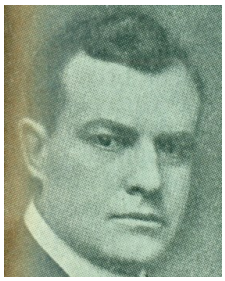
Owasippe was built to be the finest camps in the country. The businessmen who endowed Owasippe, intended that their sons and grandsons would camp there. In the modern era there is a wide range of summer opportunities available for children of the affluent. Computer camps, horse camp, high adventure trips led by world renown experts, etc. Today children of the wealthy attend camps with all the amenities that their parents expect; clean comfortable surroundings, excellent food well prepared and instruction provided by individuals with experience in the subject being taught. In the early years when most councils were trying to find an appropriate property, asking troop leaders to run program and meals were cooked by the scouts themselves, Owasippe was setting a new standard. The final period of camp in 1913 was set aside for First Class scouts who had shown proficiency to train them for special work as Patrol Leaders. The visiting instructors were; George Corsan, the famous swimmer, Samuel Moffitt, National Field Scout Commissioner and Ernest Thompson Seaton as a special guest of honor. Again, if you are providing a First Class experience you want the best and most prominent instructors.

The Founders

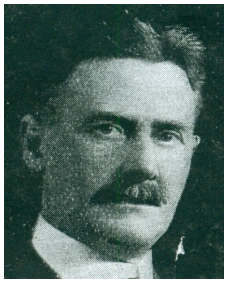
One of my regrets in this project was my inability to discover more of the story of the founders of Owasippe. Late in the project I received additional information on A. Stamford White that, in my mind, identified him as "the founder" and driving force behind Owasippe.



A. Stamford White



R. Douglas Stuart



D.W. Pollard

A. Stamford White was a prominent Chicago businessman and President of the Chicago Board of Trade. He has been identified elsewhere as a prominent architect and there is a famous individual of the same name, but he is not the A Stamford White of Owasippe. White was the leader of the committee that secured the original camp property in 1910. The Chicago Board of Trade is recognized for funding the early buildings at Owasippe. As President of the Board of Trade, White was the man who was instrumental in all aspects of funding Owasippe. Mr. White was born in England and immigrated to Chicago in 1881. He established himself as a commodity trader, later becoming the President of the Board of Trade. He was an active member of the Board of Managers of the YMCA and a trustee of the Chicago Home for Boys. It was White who secured D.W. Pollard, from the YMCA, to be Chicago's first Council Secretary. White was active on the national BSA level since 1910 and was one of four early National Vice Presidents of the BSA. Mr. White passed away in October 1918 from what seemed to be influenza after attending a conference in Washington D. C. In the 1930's and early 1940's, Owasippe was renamed The A. Stamford White Owasippe Scout Reservation, but for unknown reasons the name was not kept.

Stuart was President of the Quaker Oats Company. He followed White as Council President and served for over twenty years. Unlike White, Stuart didn't serve in any national positions. My research has lead me to believe that there may have been animosity between Stuart and individuals at the national office. One clue to a rift with National Headquarters is the fact that Stuart didn't receive the Silver Buffalo until 1947. Stuart was the type of man whom one would have expected to be a natural for such an award. Council President for over twenty years, benefactor to Owasippe and President of one of the largest and best known companies in the USA. The Silver Buffalo started in 1926 and Chicagoan Howard F. Gillette received the award in 1928, yet Stuart wasn't recognized until 1947. The name of Camp McDonald was changed in 1935 to honor Stuart. Stuart was later the USA Ambassador to Canada. On the Silver Buffalo listing on the internet, Stuart is recognized as the Ambassador to Canada but there is no mention of his pioneering service to Scouting in Chicago or his twenty plus years as Chicago Council President and board member.

Pollard was the Chicago Council Secretary, (later called Scout Executive) 1910 to 1914. In 1915 he left Chicago for Los Angeles to organize the new BSA council there. Pollard had been recruited to the BSA from the Chicago YMCA by A. Stamford White. In the early years the Council Secretary/ Executives powers were not what they became in later years, but Pollard was certainly involved in implementing the desires of the Council Executive Board for Owasippe.

These men and others were the driving force behind Owasippe, it's a shame that so little is known about them.

Camp White/Crystal Lake Camp /Camp O-wa-sip-pe (i)

Contradicting documents exist regarding the name of the camp. A 1919 pamphlet claims that it was originally named Camp White but the name was changed to O-wa-sip-pe in 1913. Yet, a 1914 camp application refers to it as Crystal Lake Camp and a 1914 postcard identifies it as Camp White. The name Owasippe does not appear until 1915 at which time an Indian legend was discovered and a campers society formed. My research has lead me to believe that the camp was not called Owasippe until the legend and society were developed. (1915) The hyphenated spelling, O-wa-sip-pe was used through 1921, perhaps in an effort to help scouts learn the pronunciation of the new name.

Scouts left Chicago aboard a Goodrich Line boat for Whitehall, Michigan at 8:30 am for the trip across Lake Michigan and arrived at Whitehall in the afternoon. The boat docked on White Lake, an inland lake that feeds into Lake Michigan and Scouts hiked the few miles to camp while their baggage was transported on a camp vehicle. What an adventure it must have been. Boys, most of whom had never been away from home, would leave the city, take a ship across Lake Michigan, arrive at a small town the likes of which few had ever seen and hike into the woods. Attending Owasippe fulfilled the requirement, a Scout is Brave. Many of the boys who made this journey would repeat the experience a few years later, boarding a ship, crossing an ocean and hiking into the woods, in France, during World War I or II.

These early postcards identify the camp as Crystal Lake Boy Scout Camp, Whitehall, Michigan

By 1914 the Crystal Lake camp was being promoted as a council wide camp, even through other districts were operating their own separate camps. In 1916 the camp was promoted as Five Big Camps, each under the direction of individual scouting professionals. (all at the same Camp) By having local District Executives in charge of the camp for different weeks, it was hoped that boys from their districts would attend during those weeks.

In the early years the camp was referred to as "the Chicago scout ***summer training camp***". Scouts were certainly getting training but in the modern era we don't usually associate the word scout training with summer camp. This term was used in camp promotion, but dropped by 1920.

Besides substantial structures like the dining hall and camp buildings the camp had ten "unsinkable" metal boats, four canoes and amenities unknown at other early scout camps. Excellent meals were prepared by African American cooks, most of whom had worked at restaurants in the city. The camp had a fully equipped wood shop and a photo studio with dark room for developing film. There was no other camp in early scouting that even remotely had the benefits of Owasippe.

In 1921 the facilities were expanded from the single camp on Crystal Lake to two camps. The new camp was named James E. West for the young Chief Scout Executive and the name of the original camp (1911) was changed to honor the pioneering Scout leader, Dan Beard. The camps on Crystal Lake would become the Owasippe Camps, each with a separate camp name. In the 1930's and 40's the name; A. Stamford White, Owasippe Camps was used.

Camp Dan Beard 1921

In 1921, when a second camp was developed, Camp Owasippe was renamed Dan Beard. Owasippe would become the general name to describe the group of camps near Whitehall, Michigan. Camp Beard served units primarily from the North Shore and West Side Districts, but as West Side membership grew, they wanted a separate camp.

As the original property, Camp Beard set the standard for the type of facility and amenities the other camps would have. Structures varied by style from camp to camp but they all followed the same pattern, large airy dining halls with modern kitchens (modern in the era the camp was built) with dishwashing platforms adjacent, a camp office or lodge, a sheltered handicraft center, a nature center and trading post or camp store. Dining hall food service with a large active staff supervising and providing instruction to campers was an unusual way of running a scout camp in the earliest years; ultimately this method became the *Owasippe Way*.

Owasippe campers slept on spring beds with mattresses in 16' x 16' wall tents with wooden platforms. Scouts were in camp for two weeks and comfort was important. More primitive types of camps were experimented with, but usually in conjunction with older boy programs.

The Saddle Bag Cabin was the Camp Dan Beard headquarters, and like all camp headquarters this building served many purposes. The Camp Director was there along with camp administration. The cabin had a cozy fireplace and inviting covered porch and it served as a meeting place and lounge. Every camp had a well stocked camp store, later called a Trading Post with refreshments, handicraft supplies, camp memorabilia, writing material and uniform parts.

Camp James E. West 1921

Camp James E. West opened in 1921 with Carroll Edson as the first Director. Edson and the new Council Executive, H. H. Hurt came to Chicago in 1921 after working on the National BSA Staff. Camp West was named by Edson and Hurt to honor their former boss at National Headquarters. Scouts from the south side of Chicago, the Calumet and South Shore Districts camped at West.

The original dining hall at Camp West, it was destroyed by fire in 1932. It was identical to Camp McDonald's. Fire and vandalism was an ongoing problem at Owasippe. There was a staff of caretakers but the area had a huge deer population. During hunting season unauthorized people roamed the property. Lightening strikes and grass fires were a constant danger.

Headquarters at Camp West was a log cabin with a unique stone fireplace

Nature Study Center at Camp West

Handicraft Center at Camp West

Nature study centers usually had a fenced area for small animals. Most had poured concrete basins in the ground for turtles and snakes. Handicraft centers had a large open area under a roof where work could be performed on picnic tables, protected from the elements, yet allowing a cooling breeze to pass through. The handicraft centers usually had screening around the open area to help keep insects out.

CAMP WEST

The summer of 1927 is undoubtedly the best that the camp has ever had. The attendance was somewhat larger each period than the corresponding period last year, but more important, the boys all had a happier time than ever. Definite care was taken to minimize the amount of work expected of the boys and to increase the emphasis on the recreational program. Moreover, throughout the entire program, effort was made to make it more informal, to remove unessential restrictions and regulations, and to make activities so far as possible optional. The boys were not driven so hard as in previous years, and had more opportunity for rest, as well as greater freedom in the choice of activity. The net result has been that the boys have had a very happy camp experience. This fact is clearly shown by the very large proportion of "Stayovers" from period to period, these averaging in excess of 40%—the highest it has ever been.

The Fourth of July celebration the first period was greatly enjoyed, as always, and the Treasure Hunt was a big feature. The second period stunt was to have been an Indian Hunt, and we were all set for that, when word came that a child was lost at one of the resorts on White Lake. A real—not a play—hunt ensued, in which the Scouts did wonderful work in searching for the boy. Fifty Camp West Scouts formed a skirmish line at six foot intervals, and beat back and forth across the territory assigned to them, holding them, holding their line direction and intervals in remarkable fashion, and the boys of other camps did similarly. Eventually the boy was located by a party including Edward Colcard and Jules Weisberg, two of our Scout Life Guards, he having been drowned in White Lake.

The Circus was the big feature third period, and went off better than ever. There was a splendid program, featuring the more spectacular parts of Scouting, including tent pitching, outdoor cookery and pioneering construction. Then came the usual fourth period barbecue, which is always relished and another Treasure Hunt, and finally the big Fifth Period Inter-Camp Treasure Hunt.

The swimming this year was the thing that made the biggest impression on the Scouts, with the lake up, and our having exclusive use of the old pier. And the eats came a close second, being far better than even the excellent meals we had last year. Then, for those who were eligible the canoes were a big attraction. Particularly the trips down the White River were greatly enjoyed. The older First Class Scouts now have something definite to come back to camp for. The physical improvements of the camp were another big factor, the new tent floors being especially enjoyed, and the nature study pavilion built during the season proved a big addition to the camp. Yes, it was unquestionably Camp West's best season. Ask anyone who was there.

CARROLL A. EDSON, Director

Camp McDonald

Come on, old campers, let's go for Camp McDonald! Prospects for the year would indicate 1927 is going to be the banner year at old Camp Mac.

Mr. Raymond Lalor, our Camp Activities Director, has a lot of new ideas on all types of suggestions, and suggests and requests that old and new campers bring musical instruments and any other equipment that they think might be interesting.

A beauty contest will be conducted each period, so any make-up equipment you can bring, or special clothing, will be useful.

R. E. MOWEN
Camp Director

Camp Checaugau

Well, Scouts, camping season is here and I am packing my things ready to ship up to camp. I will leave with my efficient camp staff next Friday evening, June 24th, and will have camp ready for you. Did you know that the first period of camp opens June 27th? What about your camp reservation? Well, say! you had better hurry and get it in because the periods are sure filling up fast.

I would like to see you all again at camp this summer, and bring with you some Scout that has not been up to Big Blue yet. Oh! boy, what a thrill he'll get when he sees that wonderful big lake of ours and the thousands and thousands of beautiful pines. Um Boy! I could almost smell 'em and say, the appetite you work up at camp, and then the mess call, and eats! Oh boy, oh boy, do we eat?

Well, anyway you that have been up at camp know all about it. Gee, but it's great to see old Checaugau again.

Well, I thought I would kinda remind you to be sure and send in your reservation just as soon as you can. You'll be sorry if you're turned down on the period you had intended to go.

So long—C u in camp.

CARL A. BRYAN

Camp Blackhawk

Scouts, this is your camp. It is the one that you have been working for, for many years. At one time, when Camp Owasippe was first started and Mr. L. L. McDonald, now National Camp Director, was in charge, the West Side had the greatest number of Scouts of any of the districts. Then, for some reason we went to sleep for many years. Others got ahead of us, and it was necessary for us to camp with someone else. But now again, since the beginning of 1926, we have a camp of our own, Camp Blackhawk, and if we continue to have enough West Side Scouts camping there on Big Blue Lake, we will be able to retain this camp as ours. Old Campers, here is your opportunity to not only go back to Camp in 1927, but to enlist 1—2—3—8—or more new Scouts to go with you.

Oh Boy! You should see the program:

4th of July Celebration—First Period.

You've heard about the Tiger Hunt. Well, we won't pull the same thing again this year. You'll be surprised.

Third Period. Venetian Night—Hurray! for the water.

Fourth Period—Everybody likes the Barbecue.

Fifth Period—As usual the Treasure Hunt. Twenty-five lakes last year. One fellow thought he saw a million.

Besides all this, there are the big hikes, the canoe trips on White River for all who are good swimmers and canoeists.

Of course, everybody passes tests and advances in Scouting.

The Eats—Yum—Yum!

Mr. Samson and Captain Mayhew tell us that the same cooks will be back.

ALLEN R. CARPENTER
Camp Director

Camp McDonald-1922-1934 Camp Stuart after 1935

Camp McDonald opened in 1922. Camp Beard and West were named for prominent national scouting figures while McDonald was named for Louis McDonald a pioneering Chicago Executive. McDonald helped establish a tradition of scout camping in Chicago and became National BSA Director of Camping. Camp McDonald served scouts from the west & southwest area of the city. Originally Central Mfg., Stockyards & Southwest Districts, later these districts combined into one Southwest District. Charles V. Hines, the Executive of the Southwest District was the first director.

Camp McDonald/Stuart dining hall

Camp McDonald/Stuart headquarters cabin

These structures followed the established design for Owasippe buildings that started at Camp Beard.

This photograph of scouts helping construct a log cabin was taken about 1916. The cabin was built around the lake from the original Crystal Lake camp and named the Merit Badge Lodge. Older scouts would hike around the lake for merit badge instruction at the "lodge." When Camp McDonald started, the location of the Merit Badge Lodge, high on a hill overlooking Crystal Lake, was selected for the site. The cabin built by North Shore District campers became the centerpiece of Camp McDonald.

The Merit Badge Lodge at Camp McDonald/Stuart was one of the famous Owasippe landmarks. The structures at the individual camps were similar, yet the stockade at Camp McDonald was different and McDonald campers were proud of their building, sometimes called The Garrison. The Order of the Arrow Lodge at Camp McDonald and later for Southwest District was named Garrison. The building was demolished after a storm in the 1970's.

Camp McDonald becomes Camp Stuart

In 1935 R. Douglas Stuart had been Council President for over twenty five years. He was one of the founders of Owasippe and a member of the family that owned the Quaker Oats Company. His (and his companies) generosity were well known. He pitched in with extra funds as emergency after emergency arose. In 1935 Camp McDonald was renamed, Camp Stuart. Camp McDonald and Louis L. McDonald are lost in history, but it's a shame that R. Douglas Stuart is virtually unknown to modern Chicago scouters.

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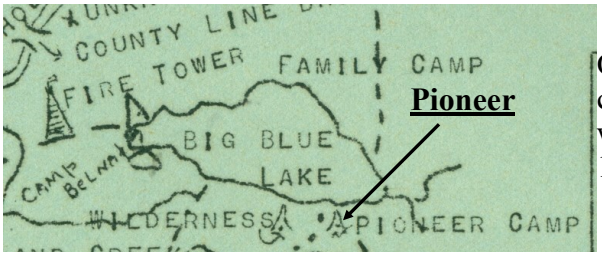
Camp Blackhawk 1926-1932

Camp Blackhawk was the first full service camp on Big Blue Lake built in 1925. A new camp on a new lake required totally separate infrastructure. But, the Chicago Council was growing, and it was determined that the individual districts should have their own camps at Owasippe. The camp was originally for units of the West Side District which had been camping at Camp Shabbona. Blackhawk was to be the West Side District Camp. West Side District units could never fill Blackhawk, and in later years some North Shore District units which were overflowing Camp Beard moved to Blackhawk. Alan Carpenter, Executive of the West Side District was Blackhawk's first Director.

Camp Blackhawk had the standard compliment of facilities, craft lodge, nature study building, etc.

Blackhawk & Checaugau close

With the economic depression of the 1930's, attendance at Owasippe plummeted. The council found itself with multiple camps that had been bustling with attendance now only half full. The operating expenses did not decrease although attendance did. The idea that each district needed its own camp was reviewed and ended. Camp traditions were one thing, but keeping the camps and council solvent was another. Districts had shared camps before the camps at Owasippe were built and would have to do so again. In 1932 Blackhawk campers attended Camp Checaugau, but because of shrinking attendance at Beard, McDonald & West, in 1933 Camp Checaugau was closed.



On the 1938 map, to the left, you can see that the campsite at the southeast end of Big Blue Lake that was earlier identified as Camp Blackhawk is (in 1938) identified as Pioneer Camp.

Camp Pioneer 1937-1948 *at the Blackhawk site*

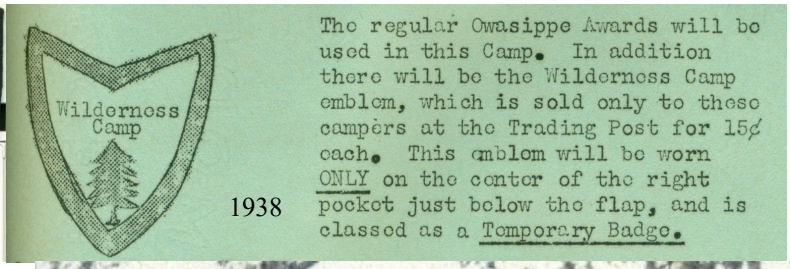
Campers returned to the old Blackhawk site in 1937. Property insurance records from the late 1930's have the name Blackhawk lined out and the name Pioneer written in. A lone troop camp named Pioneer had operated on the north side of Big Blue Lake east of Hiawatha Beach in the 1920's and would return to the same location in the 1950's. From 1937 through 1948, the site on the southeast end of Big Blue Lake, just east of Wilderness was known as Pioneer Camp. The camp operated as a full service camp, just like the Crystal Lake Camps with a staff including; Naturalist, Hikemaster, Handicraft and Aquatic. I have pondered why the camp name was changed and it is my *belief* that it had something to do with district allegiances. West Side District could never fill Blackhawk, during the depression, Blackhawk was the first camp to close. When Camp Checaugau closed, both West Side and Northwest Districts did not have camps. There may have been some wisdom in using a new name for the old full service camp on Big Blue Lake to try and break the idea that individual districts had their own camps.

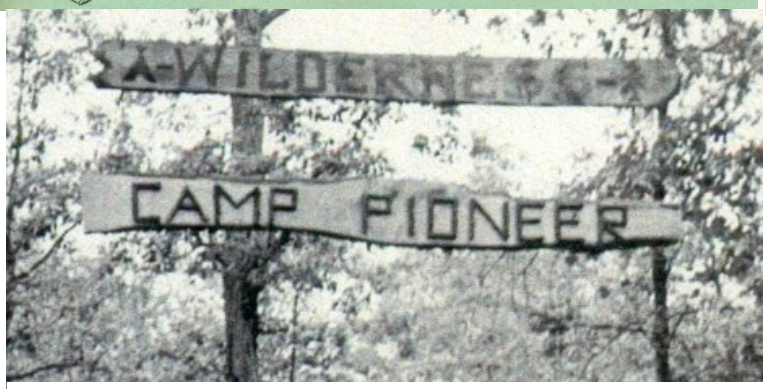
The NEW Camp Blackhawk 1949

In 1949, Camp Blackhawk re-emerged and a troop camp named Pioneer was re-established at the old location on the north side of Big Blue Lake. In 1949, the Chicago districts were realigned from the six districts that had served the council since 1933 to 24 districts. The idea of one district using a camp to the exclusion of others was over. In 1949 the Midwest, South Central, Austin, Cicero and West Central District had weeks at Blackhawk. It is interesting to note that most of these districts had been part of the old West Side District which had called Blackhawk its home in the 1920's. Blackhawk became as famous as any of the Crystal Lake camps. In the 1950's with Stuart overflowing many North Shore District units started using Camp Blackhawk. Blackhawk continued as a full service camp through the 50th anniversary.

Camp Wilderness and Pioneer Insignia

There is no known insignia from the Crystal Lake Camps; Beard, McDonald/Stuart or West. Badges exist for Camp Pioneer and Wilderness. These were only available for a few years (1938-40). There must have been an outcry from the other camps when individual camp badges were available for Pioneer and Wilderness, but not for Beard, McDonald/Stuart & West.


Wilderness
Camp
1938
The regular Owasippe Awards will be used in this Camp. In addition there will be the Wilderness Camp emblem, which is sold only to these campers at the Trading Post for 15¢ each. This emblem will be worn ONLY on the center of the right pocket just below the flap, and is classed as a Temporary Badge.



Sign post circa 1938.

In 1957 & 1958, a segment was available for scouts that had a wilderness camping experience at Owasippe. The requirement was simply that they use their own tents and equipment. They didn't necessarily camp at Camp Wilderness. The segment was for any wilderness experience away from the full service camps. The segment is scarce and it may be because most units preferred the full service camps.

CAMP DIRECTORS "REMINISCE"

CAMP BLACKHAWK DIVISIONS

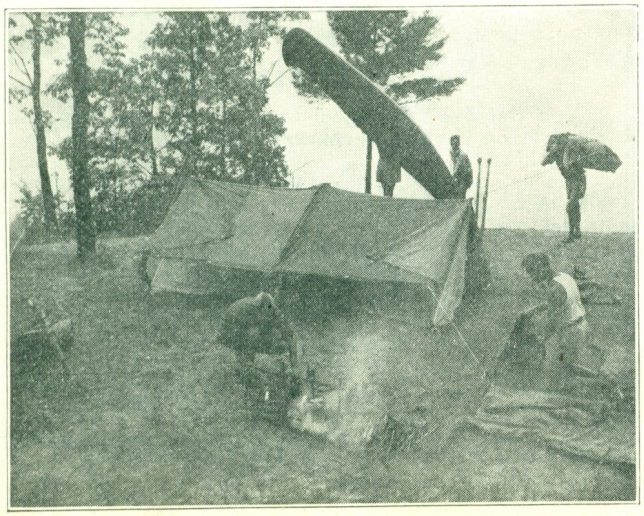
Camp Blackhawk experimented with an older boy program during the season of 1927. The names of the different divisions were Pioneers, Indians, Engineers, Coast Guard, and Seascouts. This was not the first experiment. A similar program was tried in 1925 and it worked so successfully that it was used on a larger scale this year. Fifty per cent of the Scouts in camp the 4th period were enrolled in the divisional program. Forty-two per cent participated during the 5th period.

The Pioneers built their shelters on one hill and a short distance away the Indians pitched their tepees. The Engineers were off by themselves also what little time they were in camp. Most of their days and nights were spent, out on the line, surveying through the deep woods and in to almost impassable swamps. These Scouts would establish headquarters at some place high and dry where they would sleep and eat, returning for a second and third night sometimes. The Coast Guard were established at the water front where they were ever on duty both in work and play. The Seascouts used the log cabin as headquarters, but most of their time was spent in and on the water. They, like the Coast Guard and other divisional groups, however, participated in such parts of the regular camp program as cooking, hikes, treasure hunts, and the barbecue.

Only old campers were allowed to take part in these older boy programs. The keen competition of being the best camper of any one of the five older Scout groups assured clean, snappy, high-grade camping at all times. There was no racing to assemblies but every Divisional Program man was on time for meals, the division table was always orderly and well-cleaned, and the contribution of the different divisions to the good of the camp was noticeable.

The Pioneers not only built Adirondack shelters but made good headway on other improvements. Their uniforms representing buckskin shawls and coats set them off and very closely resembled that of the frontiersman of the early days. They helped in the building of the Council ring, the bridge, and the diving tower.

The Indians whose costume consisted of the head gear, shorts, and painted body, lived in their tepees and worked on the long house and grass mats. They tried hard to earn the feathers that distinguished them as braves, warriors, or chiefs. They marked out some new trails and furnished good entertainment at camp fires and showed the new campers how to make woods beds.



The Engineers surveyed the greater part of two sections as their extra contribution to camp this Summer. The Coast Guards taught Sinkers to swim and assisted with the rest of the water program by doing Life Guard work by shifts throughout the day. The Seascouts built a sailing vessel from a clinker row boat; the canvass of a discarded tent was used for the sails.

Adult leaders and experienced campers helped guide the work of the older Scouts who were in the divisional program.

COOKING

In past years Camp Blackhawk has fostered the idea of having the scouts do their own cooking on hikes. This year marks the start of a new phase in camp-cooking. When the scouts arrived in camp they were split up into cooking groups. Each group cooked over its own fire and did all their firemaking, etc. On their first day in camp they were instructed in making fires and fire-places. They were then able to proceed to cooking instructions the next day. The first lesson was in cooking oatmeal. Although this is not hard, the scouts learned several wrinkles about preparing oatmeal in a tasty way. On following days they were shown how to bake potatoes, make biscuit, stew, and rice pudding. The real test came on the first Friday when the whole camp cooked the noon meal out-of-doors. Every one had enough to eat and many of the scouts made dishes which would be a credit to any good cook.

On the overnight hike each boy carried only materials to be cooked. There were no cans issued which is something new in the Owasippe Scout Camps. When it was time for second class, first class, and merit badge cooking it was found that no instructions were necessary, as the scouts were prepared. The better cooks the scouts become, the better will be their camping.

HIKING

Overnite hikes to the White River Country combined with the treasure hunt was a climax of real adventure, and an honest to goodness thrill. As we combined nature study with hiking our exploration hikers found new points of interest at the end of every trail. From new ways of cooking learned on these hikes Scouts were well fed and slept comfortably on beds which they learned to make. Every Scout was taught proper packing, bed making, and his packs and hiking equipment were inspected before starting on a trip.

CANOEING Down the WHITE RIVER

(From the Canoe's Log, "Spirit of Owasippe")

It was late afternoon when two canoes were taken from a truck and slipped into the White River at Podunk Bridge. They represented Camps Blackhawk and Checaugau, making the season's first trip down the river. Blackhawk's canoe crew was Teker, Ockenga, and Miller (myself). The party was equipped with tools to clear the river of bad obstructions.

The river was shallow and rocky at first and then deeper and sandy. A great variety of trees and birds were identified. The scenery was beautiful with sunny and shady places, overhanging trees, water plants over which hovered damsel flies.

A portage was made around a fallen bridge and log jam. Here brush was cut and a path made for future trips.

It was nearly dark when camp was made on a high bank. It rained at night but we were comfortable in a mosquito bar under a Baker tent.

The next day the sun was out and we continued down stream meeting with a number of incidents and did more clearing. We pulled out at Deadman's Rollway and portaged about a mile into Big Blue Lake. A short run across a choppy lake and we were back in camp in time for supper.

It was a great trip.

ALLAN R. CARPENTER, Camp Director

Camp Checaugau 1926-1933

Camp Checaugau (at Owasippe) opened in 1926. It was the second full service camp on Big Blue Lake. The Northwest District was one of the largest in the city and had operated a district camp near Palatine, IL. since 1919. Troops from the Northwest District were not anxious to abandon their old camp. Even though the new camp at Owasippe was magnificent, memories of the old camp were very much alive. Camp Checaugau was built around what had been a commercial hotel, high on a hill overlooking Big Blue Lake. The view of the lake from the front porch of what became the dining hall was breathtaking. Camp headquarters was in a newly constructed large log cabin with a beautiful stone fireplace. Carl Bryan, Scout Executive of the Northwest District was the first director.

Destroyed by fire in the fall of 1936.

One of the unique features of the Camp Checaugau hotel building was that much of the operating equipment was housed in the old hotel structure. Other camp buildings at Owasippe shared operating facilities, freestanding buildings for coolers, power or water. At Camp Checaugau, most of these were contained in the large old hotel building. When the building burnt in 1936, the camp not only lost the dining hall, it lost most of its operating infrastructure.

Wendell Lodge at Camp Checaugau, donated by NW District Chairman, Barrett Wendell

Handicraft cabin at Camp Checaugau

Camp Checaugau closes 1933

During the economic depression it was necessary to close Blackhawk & Checaugau. After Camp Checaugau burnt in 1936, it was never feasible to rebuild. Attendance numbers never met expectations.

Attendance at Owasippe was waning because of the economic depression and the Northwest District had never fully embraced Camp Checaugau at Owasippe. After 1933, Northwest District units joined North Shore District troops at Camp Dan Beard. It's an interesting fact of history that old time Northwest District scouts remember Camp Stuart (McDonald name changed to Stuart in 1935) but few recall Camp Checaugau, although their OA Chapter was Checaugau until 1954. In the late 1930's, many Northwest District units that had used Camp Checaugau, camped at Camp Doddridge in Palatine, IL.

Camp Belnap on Lake Ojibwa

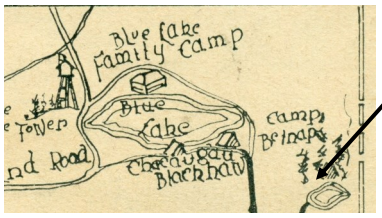
Camp Belnap was opened at Owasippe in 1926 for scouts of the Douglas Division. The Douglas Division was for African American scouts. Like other districts, the Douglas Division operated its own district camp as early as 1924, but moved to Owasippe when space was developed. The Chicago Council followed the national BSA policy of separate but equal facilities and opportunities for African American scouts. Camp Belnap was a splendid new facility east of Big Blue Lake on a high plateau with a swimming beach on Lake Ojibwa, separate from the other camps but with all the woods, water and scouting opportunities that Owasippe could offer.

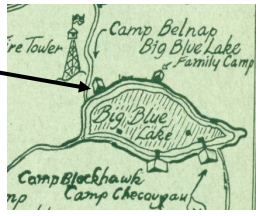
Original Belnap dining hall on Ojibwa Lake

Original Belnap Handicraft Lodge

The handicraft lodge stood at Lake Ojibwa abandoned into the 1940's.

The Lake Ojibwa location seemed like a perfect site, close enough to the Owasippe reservation but far enough away to qualify as separate. Lake Ojibwa had been a beautiful small lake, but the water started receding. It was realized that in a dry year, there may be no lake. Because of the economic depression the Lake Ojibwa site was abandoned in 1932. By 1935, the water was gone and the property wasn't even insured on the 1935 camp insurance policy. The camp site was a good one but of limited value without a lake. The handicraft building stood on the site abandoned into the 1940's. It became a hiking destination and the crumbling old log cabin was called the museum.





Camp Belnap-Hiawatha Beach on Big Blue Lake

During the economic depression, Camp Belnap attendance dropped precipitously. In the earliest years, Douglas Division scouts had been from affluent African American families. To the credit of scouting, membership grew without regard to economics. The African American community was devastated by the depression and camp attendance declined. Douglas Division membership had always been smaller than other districts, in 1935 the Douglas Division had 21 troops, West Side District, the next smallest district had 90 troops. Costs at Belnap had always been subsidized by the council, but during the economic depression the council did not have the funds.

To cover the expenses of camp, it must be occupied near capacity for most of the camping season. In 1931, Camp Belnap was barely filled for two weeks and the outlook for 1932 was worse. The Lake Ojibwa site was closed and a thirty two person dining hall with kitchen facilities was added to Camp Hiawatha Beach. Douglas Division scouts used the property at Hiawatha Beach for a couple of weeks per season and the site was used the remainder of the summer for Senior, Backwoods, or Adventure Camp. Owasippe campers may be unfamiliar with Hiawatha Beach, but Jack Coussens, twenty five year Scoutmaster of Troop 923 and thirty year Owasippe Staff member called it the best property at Owasippe. His troop and mine camped there for years. Camp Belnap on Hiawatha Beach fulfilled the obligation of separate, and it was certainly equal. Segregation was ended in 1948, and Douglas Division scouts were welcome at all Owasippe camps. But, by then many African American troops had adopted Camp Kiwanis in the southern suburbs as their own.

The 1930's and a New Way of Camping on Big Blue Lake

Chicago Council and Owasippe were leaders in camping. The way things were done at Owasippe became the way many other camps operated. Originally boys could come to camp as individuals and some stayed at camp in provisional units all summer. E. Urner Goodman tried to expand troop camping when he came to Chicago in 1927 but was largely unsuccessful. There had even been discussion at the earliest scouting professional meetings as to whether Scoutmasters were qualified to provide instruction at summer camp. But, with the advent of training in the late 1920's, it was recognized that troop camping with leadership provided by unit leaders was the new way. During the economic depression, camps had to function with smaller budgets and council management realized that with unit leadership, the expense of paid staff to provide camp leadership could be reduced. The Chicago Council
had made large investments on Big Blue Lake. Camp Checaugau was a total loss after the fire. The facilities at Blackhawk were closed, but the infrastructure was still there. Troops could prepare food for themselves on weekend camping trips, why not at summer camp. Costs could be reduced if the unit prepared, and in some cases provided its own food and leadership. However, the evidence seems to indicate that few troops wanted cost savings. Most liked the opportunities and dining hall experience of a full service camp.

Hiawatha Beach

Hiawatha Beach opened in 1928 as a high adventure camp for First Class scouts, age 15 or older. Scouts cooked their own food in the patrol method. The camp had different names including Hi. Beach, Backwoods Camp, Advanced Camp, Senior Camp, etc. In 1932, a small food preparation area was constructed and later a thirty two man dining hall. Belnap campers used the camp for two weeks a year. The various high adventure camps operated through about 1940. In 1947, Hiawatha Beach became a site for troop camping where the unit provided food or where they could get
unprepared food from the Blackhawk commissary or in later years food could be brought in by hot pack. Hiawatha Beach was still being used through the 50th anni-

Wilderness Camp

Wilderness Camp opened in 1933 on the north side of Big Blue Lake. In 1937, the camp was moved to a site just west of Camp Blackhawk. One of the features of Camp Wilderness was the patrol size Adirondack Cabins. These full sized cabins were open on one side with four double stacked beds. There were originally ten on the site and the camp was often used by two troops. In the early years, a screened 10' x 16' structure served as a cooking shelter. In 1939, a thirty two person dining hall with stoves was built, the size of the one at Hiawatha Beach. In later years (50-60's) some meals were provided in "hot packs" from the Blackhawk kitchen. Troops could camp at Wilderness with everything provided, meals by hot pack (from the Pioneer/Blackhawk kitchen) or troops could get their food from the Pioneer/Blackhawk commissary and prepare it themselves using the Camp Wilderness kitchen. Wilderness campers used the waterfront at Camp Pioneer/ Blackhawk with a waterfront staff provided.

Pioneer Camp-for Lone Troop camping

Camp Pioneer, on the north side of Big Blue Lake between Hiawatha Beach and Family Camp was the original Lone Troop camp. In the early years, it was the site for many of the older boy and high adventure camps. There is not much printed material about this camp because it generally did not offer the Owasippe programs. It had a beautiful swimming beach, but the unit had to provide their own Lifeguards.

What a 1930 promotion booklet said about the camps

CAMP BLACKHAWK

For Scouts of West Side District

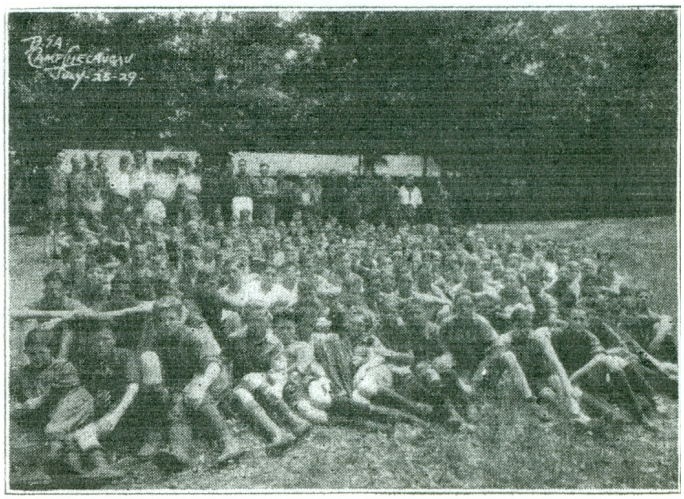
Camp Blackhawk, situated on the south shor of Big Blue Lake, is for Scouts of the West Sid District.

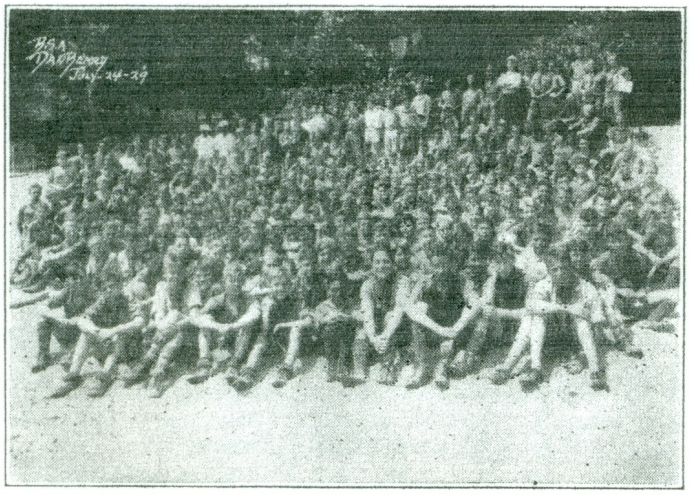
The Camp has been built on a group of smal hills. To the east is the dining hall and offices in the center by the Lake is the Headquarters On the surrounding hill tops are the camp groups. In the valley of ferns is located the na turecraft lodge. The swimming beach and pie command a view of the shoreline for miles. Al of the camp buildings are of logs. Not a tree ha been removed from the original forest excep where absolutely necessary. Camp Blackhawk is truly a woods camp.

CAMP CHECAUGAU

For Scouts of the Northwest District

Camp Checaugau, on Big Blue Lake, is for Scouts of the Northwest District. It is situated on a high bluff overlooking the Lake. Formerly a summer hotel, the buildings have been converted into a beautiful, large dining room and other camp buildings. Wendell Lodge, a most wonderful log cabin, serves as Headquarters and library building. The tent groups surround a miniature bowl-shaped valley, giving all seclusion, yet easy of access to every part of the camp.





CAMP DAN BEARD

For Scouts of the North Shore District

Entering its nineteenth season, Camp Dan Beard is the original camp of this wonderfu group of camps, and little more need be said Located high above beautiful Crystal Lake, its capacious dining room and Headquarters build ing surrounded by tent groups, parade ground unique campcraft lot and "Sleepy Hollow" be low, it is indeed a hallowed spot for old campers and a promise of happy days for new ones.

What a 1930 promotion booklet said about the camps

CAMP McDONALD

For Scouts of the South Central and Southwest Districts

"Old Camp Mac" is also one of the older camps. The famous "Merit Badge Lodge" was built on this site in 1916. Towering a hundred feet above the camp are the Crystal Lake Pines, magnificent specimens of the old forest. The buildings consist of a large dining room, Headquarters in the Lodge, handicraft shelter, the blockhouse used as a museum, and the hospital building. The tent sites are scattered back in the woods across a level plateau which finally curves down to Austin Lake. Here between these two lakes with her flags flying on a cable suspended between two gigantic pine trees, in the spot which means so much to Scouts from the Southwestern section of the city.

CAMP JAMES E. WEST

For Scouts of the Calumet and South Shore Districts

Camp West, located on Crystal Lake, has fo many years been the camping home for Scouts o the Calumet and South Shore Districts. Beau tifully located in a valley of pine trees, Camp West is truly an ideal camping spot. The dining room is spacious. Park Manor Lodge, a log cabin, houses the Headquarters and indoor re creational activities. The handicraft shelter, and Trading Post are near by with the tent groups on hilltops and across the valley.

CAMP BELNAP

For Scouts of Douglas Division

High up on a sunny plateau between two beautiful lakes, stands Camp Belnap. With its log dining room, administration building and handicraft building on one side and with its tent groups on the other, little more could be desired for an ideal camp site. Miles of woodland surround the camp; innumerable lakes and creeks are within strolling distance and beckon explorers. Lake Ojibway provides a splendid swimming hole.

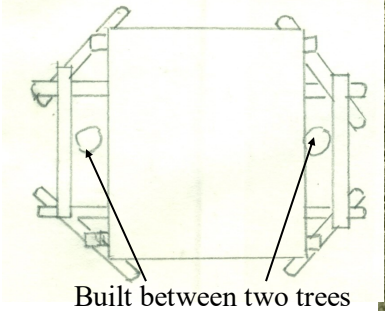
I write elsewhere about the difficulties in researching Owasippe. The information on "Old Camp Mac" is the type of thing that has given me problems. It's stated that McDonald is one of the oldest camps, but it was the 3rd camp, built in 1922, 11 years after the original camp. The Merit badge lodge built in 1916 was built by Camp Owasippe/Dan Beard scouts, 7 years before Camp McDonald was developed. Without general knowledge of Owasippe it would be easy to assume that Camp McDonald dated to 1916.

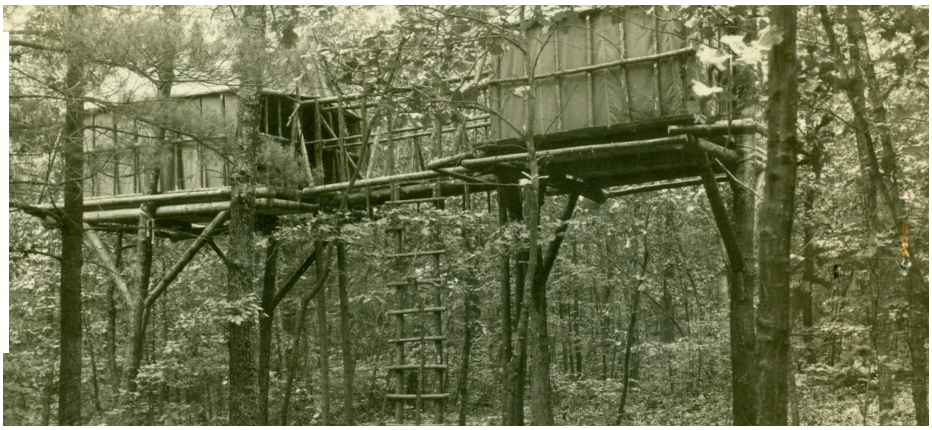
Advanced Camp-Backwoods & Pioneer Camp

In 1925, Owasippe started experimenting with camps that catered to the interests of older Scouts. Boys had to be First Class, fifteen years old and previously attended camp for at least two weeks to be eligible. If an older scout was getting bored, he could spend a week or two camping in tree houses or a grass house or a lean-too. These special interest camps featured the patrol method of cooking and the program varied by the theme of the camp. Pioneers lived in Adirondack shacks, Foresters in tree houses, Indians in teepees and the Waterfront men in beach tents.

New phases of activities were arranged such as overland hikes, canoe trips, gypsy trips, boating regattas, etc. Sailors Cove on the west end of Big Blue Lake, south of Hiawatha Beach was later developed for use as a Sea Scout camp. These camps were usually at Hiawatha Beach or Pioneer.

Tree House Platform





Tree houses from Advanced Camp, also known as Pioneer or Senior Camp 1928-1940

Lean-To's from Backwoods Camp, 1928-1940.

Lean To with a reflector fire in front

Grass shack at Dan Beard Backwoods Camp

Some of the regular camps embraced special interest themes and didn't want to lose campers to another camp. Secluded sites at Blackhawk, Beard, West or others were set aside for a short program of older boy or adventure camping.

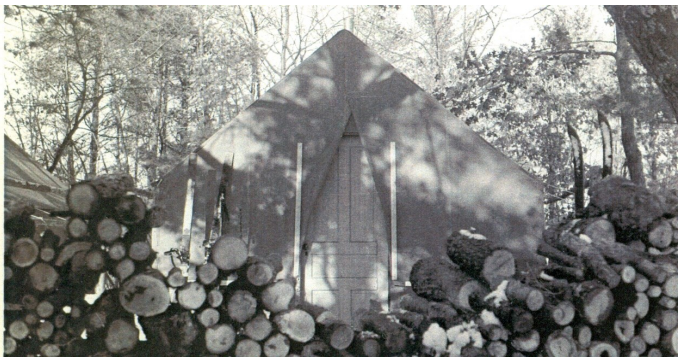
Winter & Spring Camp

This 1918 photo appeared in Scouting Magazine extolling the benefits of winter camp. It is attributed to the Michigan, Chicago Scout Training Camp (Owasippe)

The caption says " Chicago Scouts will have bear for supper tonight"

As I have stated several times in this booklet, Scouting really was different in the earliest years.

Winter Camp began in 1915 but was discontinued and begun again in 1934. It ran through 1937 and then started again in 1947 and ran through 1950. Winter camp was all fun; skating, skiing, sledding, snowshoeing and hiking. The camp was usually limited to about fifty boys, age fifteen who were First Class Scouts and veteran Owasippe campers. Camp was usually held after Christmas, December 27th through January 3rd. The cost in the 1940's was around $20. A toboggan run was constructed in 1947 that slid on-



Winter Camp used cabins with canvas tarps covering the frame to help provide insulation. Heat was provided by flat iron stoves and a good supply of firewood was of the upmost importance.

Spring Camp began in 1927 and ran through 1929. It was promoted as an adventure for "*He Men.*" *If you were First Class, able to swing an ax and your hands weren't too soft, you might enjoy the rigors of Spring Camp.* A series of Spring camps began in 1947 and was "part fun and part work". The council put it this way; *the fee of $7.00 does not begin to cover the cost of operating the camp, so the Chicago Council contributes the necessary funds. The scout agrees to contribute physical labor in developing facilities at Owasippe* (1947). Spring camp was held April 26-May 3rd or to coincide with the Chicago Public School, Spring Break week. Space was limited to one hundred Scouts, fifteen years old, First Class and with previous camping experience at Owasippe. Projects varied by year and the camp needs, some of the projects 1947-1949 were building new canoe overnight camps, repainting trail markers, fell timber in log drives, planting twelve thousand Christmas Trees and trimming Pine Trees in pine groves. It wasn't all work; campers could take White River canoe trips, go on the Owasippe exploration trip and take part in a Paul Bunyan feast. Spring Camps ran from 1947 through 1951.

Family Camp

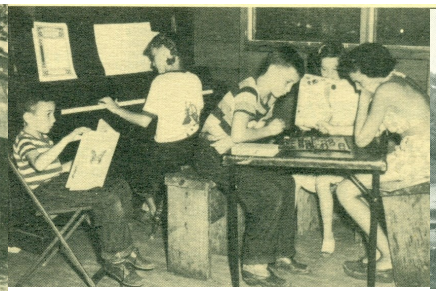
The first Family Camp was established in 1917. The Family Camp was originally designed for staff families. Being away from home for twelve weeks was a hardship for married camp staff members. In later years as more Scoutmasters came to camp with their troops, the family camps were more widely used. Lifelong friendships were developed by Family Camp families, with many returning to camp year after year.

Crystal Lake Family Cabins

Crystal Lake Family Camp dining hall

The photos above are from the 1930's but this style of family cabin was used well into the 1960's. During the 1950's Crystal Lake Family Camp had programs for families sponsored by staff members. Big Blue Family Camp had no programs.

Comfortable Cabins



Programs for children

Lifeguards from regular staff

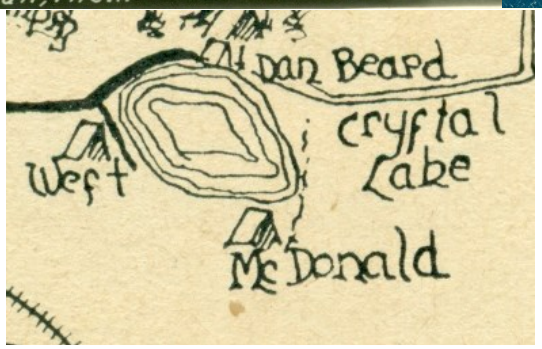
The Big Blue "hotel" had a 1,000 sq. foot front porch

Big Blue "Hotel' Family Camp

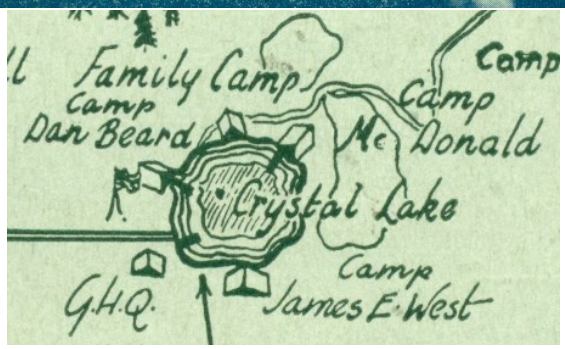
In the late 1920's, Owasippe acquired an old hotel that was located on Big Blue Lake across from Camp Black Hawk. It was in need of repairs, but because of the financial depression of the 1930's, they were never made. It was a step up over tents, but as the depression deepened the hotel was abandoned and families went back to platform tents.

Family Camp had campfires, beach barbecues and all kinds of activities.

CRYSTAL LAKE

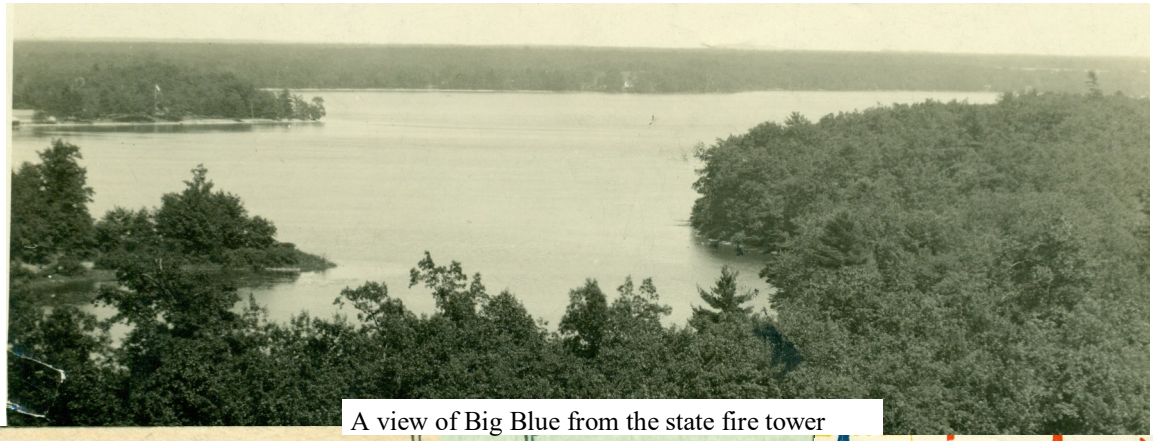


1928

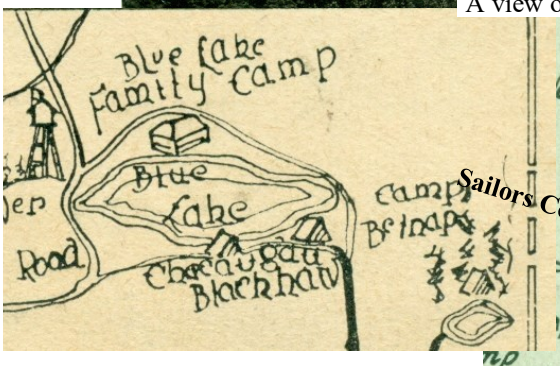


1932

BIG BLUE LAKE

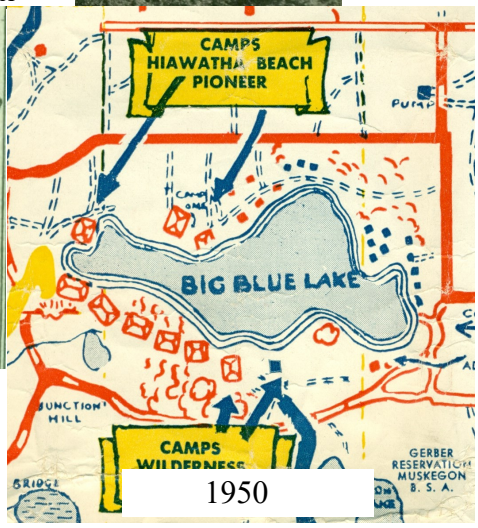


A view of Big Blue from the state fire tower



1928

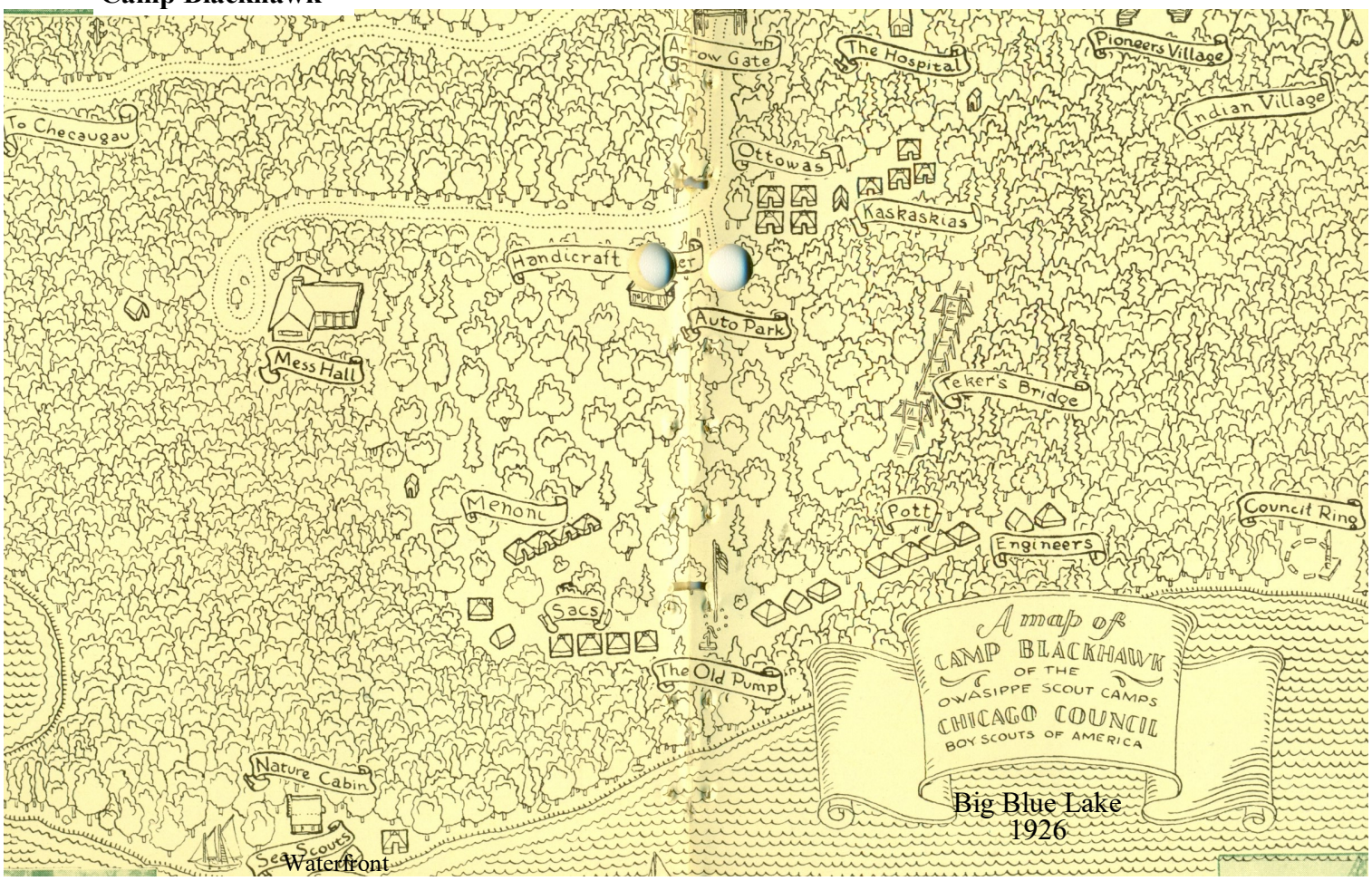
1932



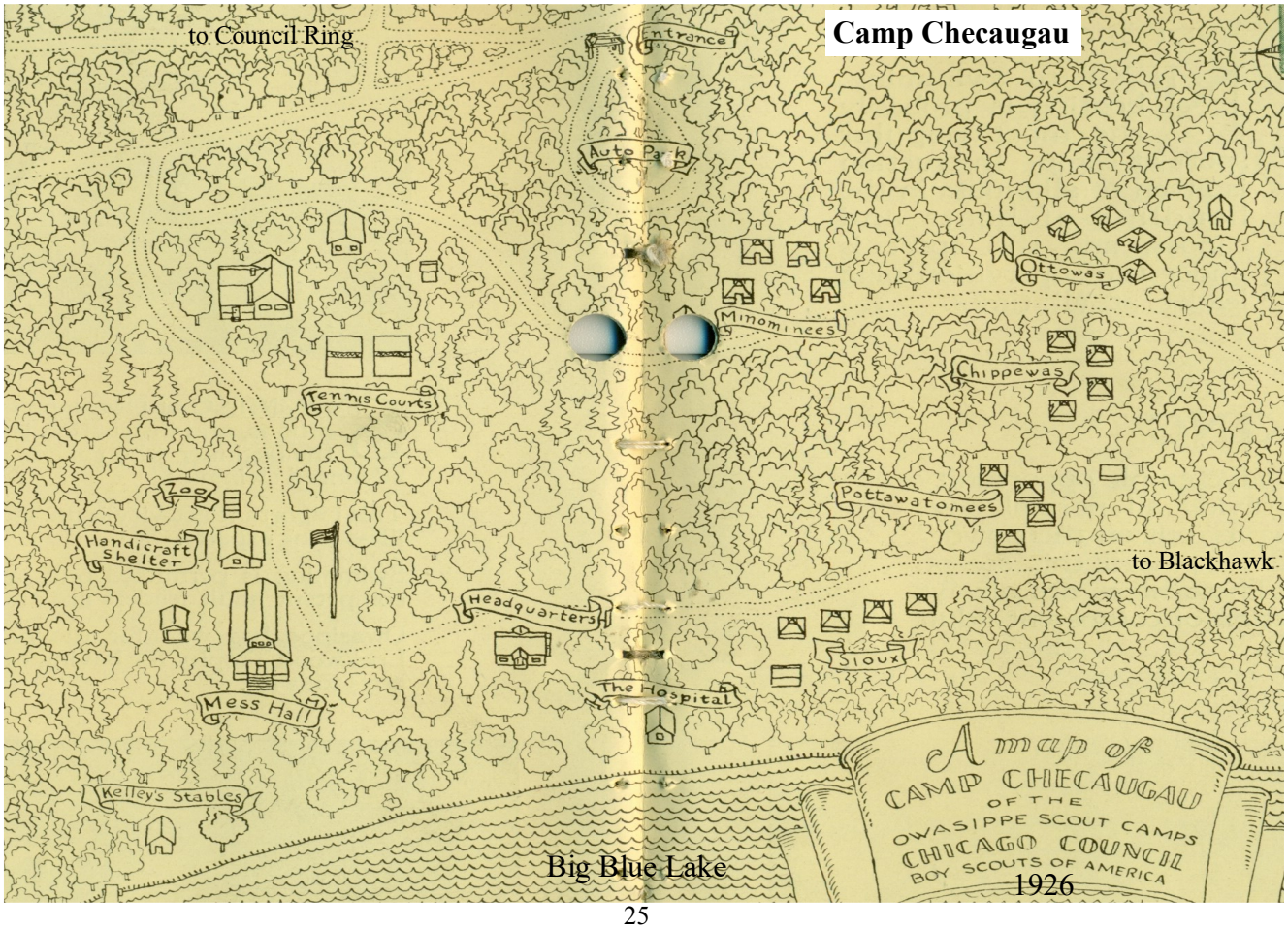
1950

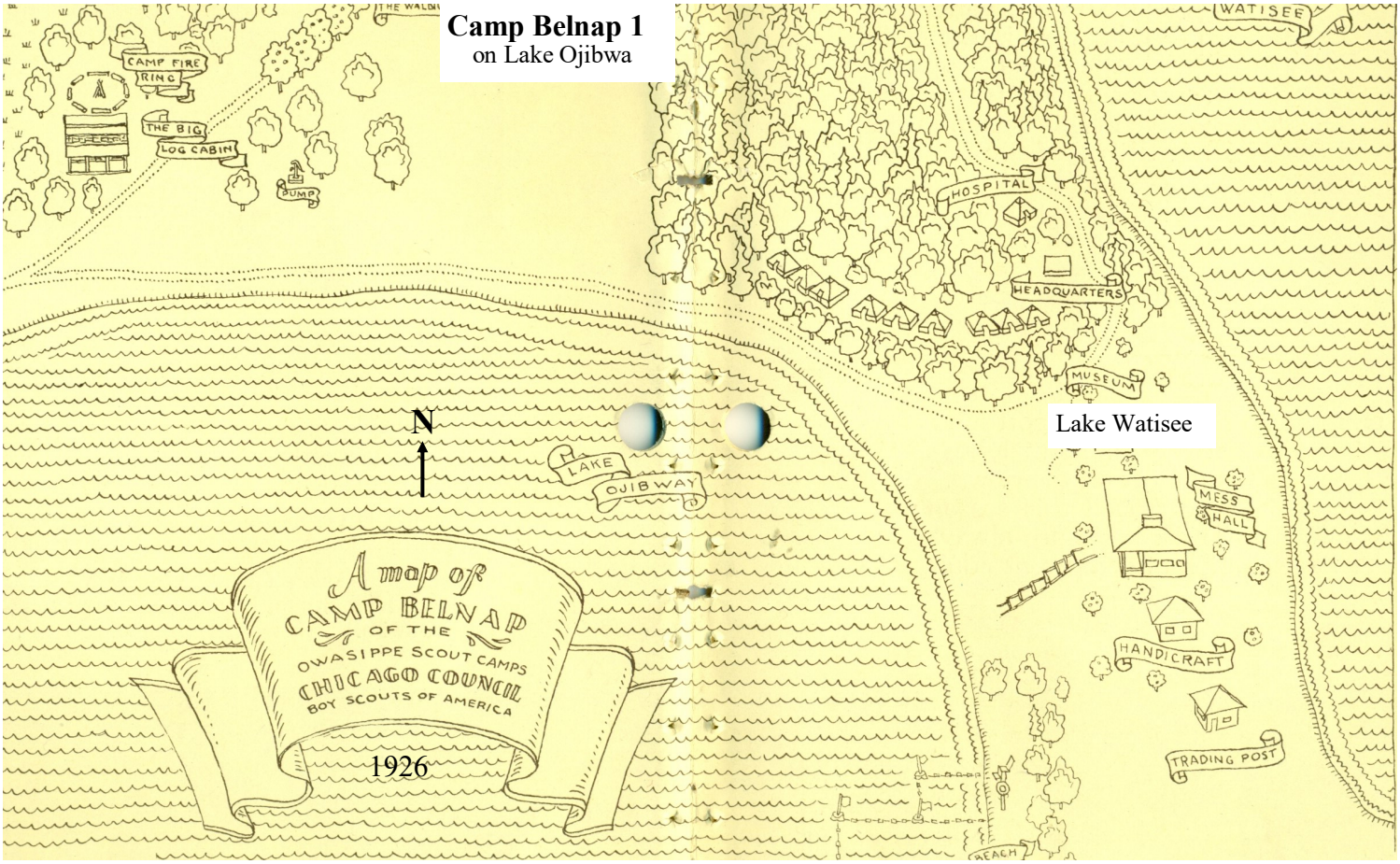
1938 Blackhawk is renamed Pioneer

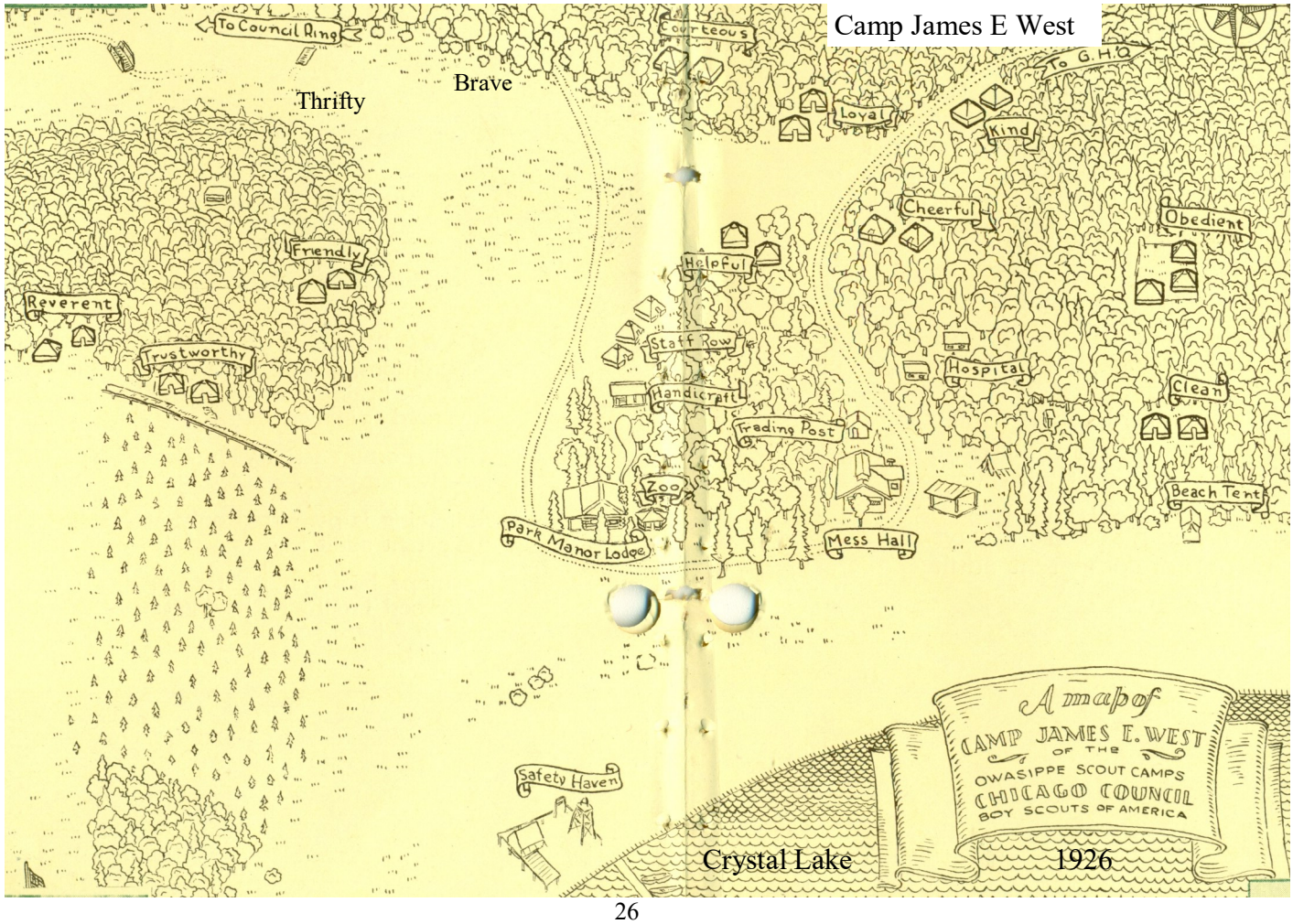
Camp Blackhawk



Camp Checaugau




Camp Belnap 1
on Lake Ojibwa
CAMP FIRE RING
THE BIG LOG CABIN
PUMP
HOSPITAL
HEADQUARTERS
MUSEUM
WATISEE
Lake Watisee
N
LAKE OJIBWAY
MESS HALL
HANDICRAFT
TRADING POST
BEACH
A map of
CAMP BELNAP
OF THE
OWASIPPE SCOUT CAMPS
CHICAGO COUNCIL
BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA
1926


Camp James E West
To Council Ring
Courteous
To G.H.Q.
Thrifty
Brave
Loyal
Kind
Cheerful
Obedient
Friendly
Helpful
Reverent
Staff Row
Trustworthy
Hospital
Handicraft
Clean
Trading Post
Zoo
Beach Tent
Park Manor Lodge
Mess Hall
Safety Haven
A map of
CAMP JAMES E. WEST
OF THE
OWASIPPE SCOUT CAMPS
CHICAGO COUNCIL
BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA
Crystal Lake
1926

What Do You Do At Owasippe?

A clean room, maybe with a view of the lake

Indian Lore

Scout skill contests

Merit Badges-Surveying

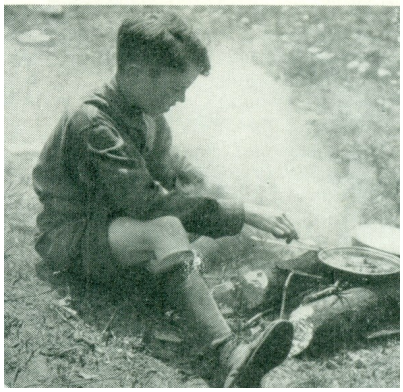
Make things for the folks back home

The fishing is great

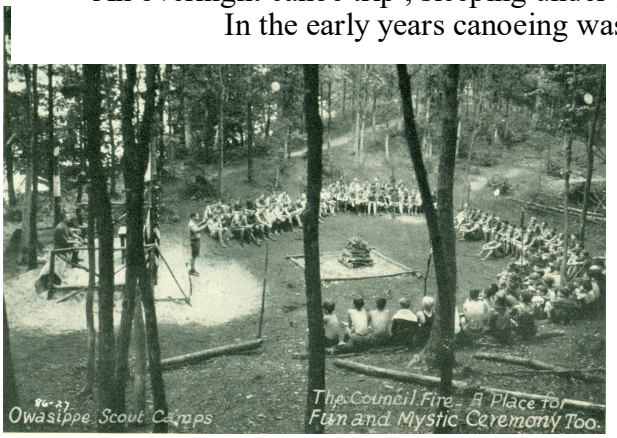
Swimming and water fun

Canoeing and boating

What Do You Do At Owasippe?



An overnight canoe trip , sleeping under your canoe and cooking your own food.
In the early years canoeing was considered a dangerous activity.

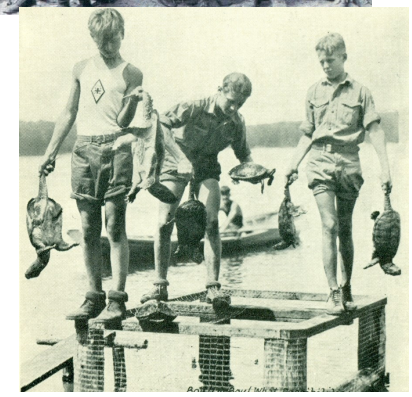


Fun around the camp fire

Skit Night with "wild animals"

Carve a totem pole for your Troop's 17th year in camp
Troop 61 River Forest. IL

There is nothing like a cold drink on a hot

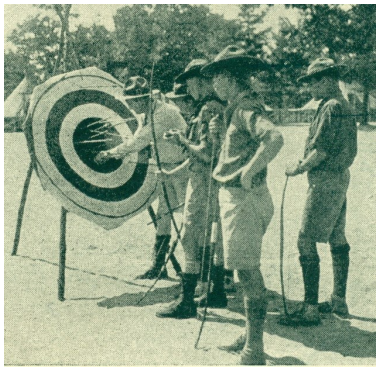


Nature Study

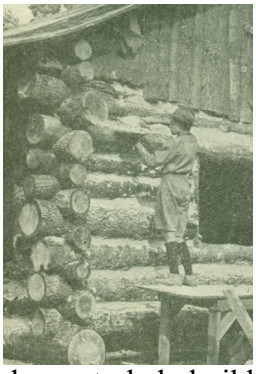
What Do You Do At Owasippe?

Tennis

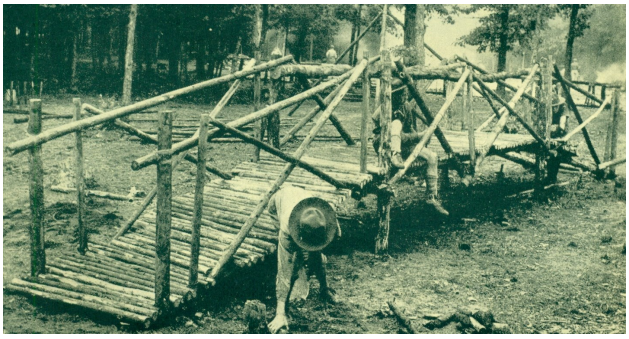
Marksmanship



Archery

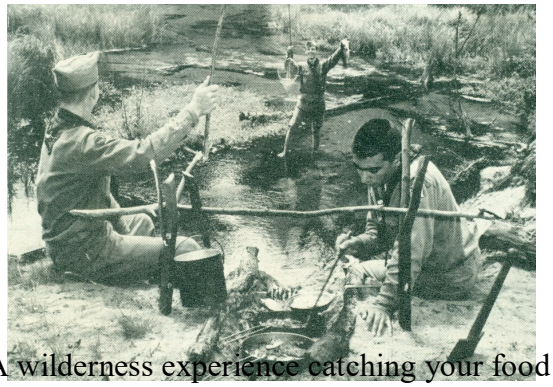


Maybe a chance to help build a log cabin



Pioneering & learning to build a bridge

An overnight hike with your patrol or troop



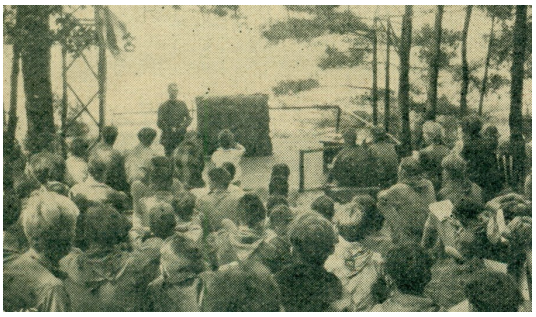
A wilderness experience catching your food

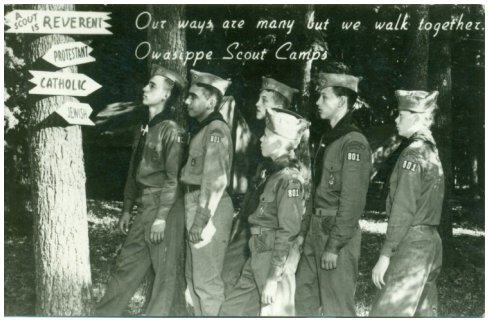
Learn signaling

Service to camp

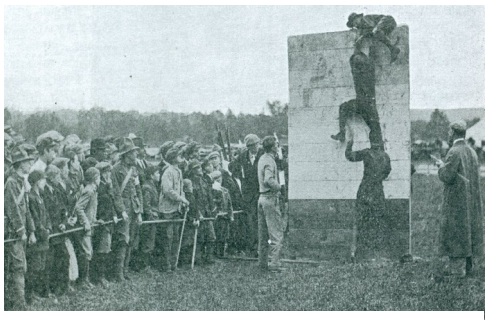
A Scout is Clean

What Do You Do At Owasippe?





A Scout is Reverent



Competition

In the earliest years, competition was stressed in most programs at camp. Contests were important events always with a winner and a loser. Over the years, scout camp evolved to a kinder-gentler place with less competition.

A Scout is Brave

At age twelve, leave the block you live on and the city behind. Take a ship across Lake Michigan and arrive at a small town the likes of which you've never seen. Hike into the woods and stay there, often with other boys you don't know for two weeks.

Camp Wide Events

In the early years, there were camp wide programs, many were repeated year after year and some became extravagant. This type of "fun" was another reason for scouts to return to camp.

barbecue night

Scout Circus day

July 4th fireworks

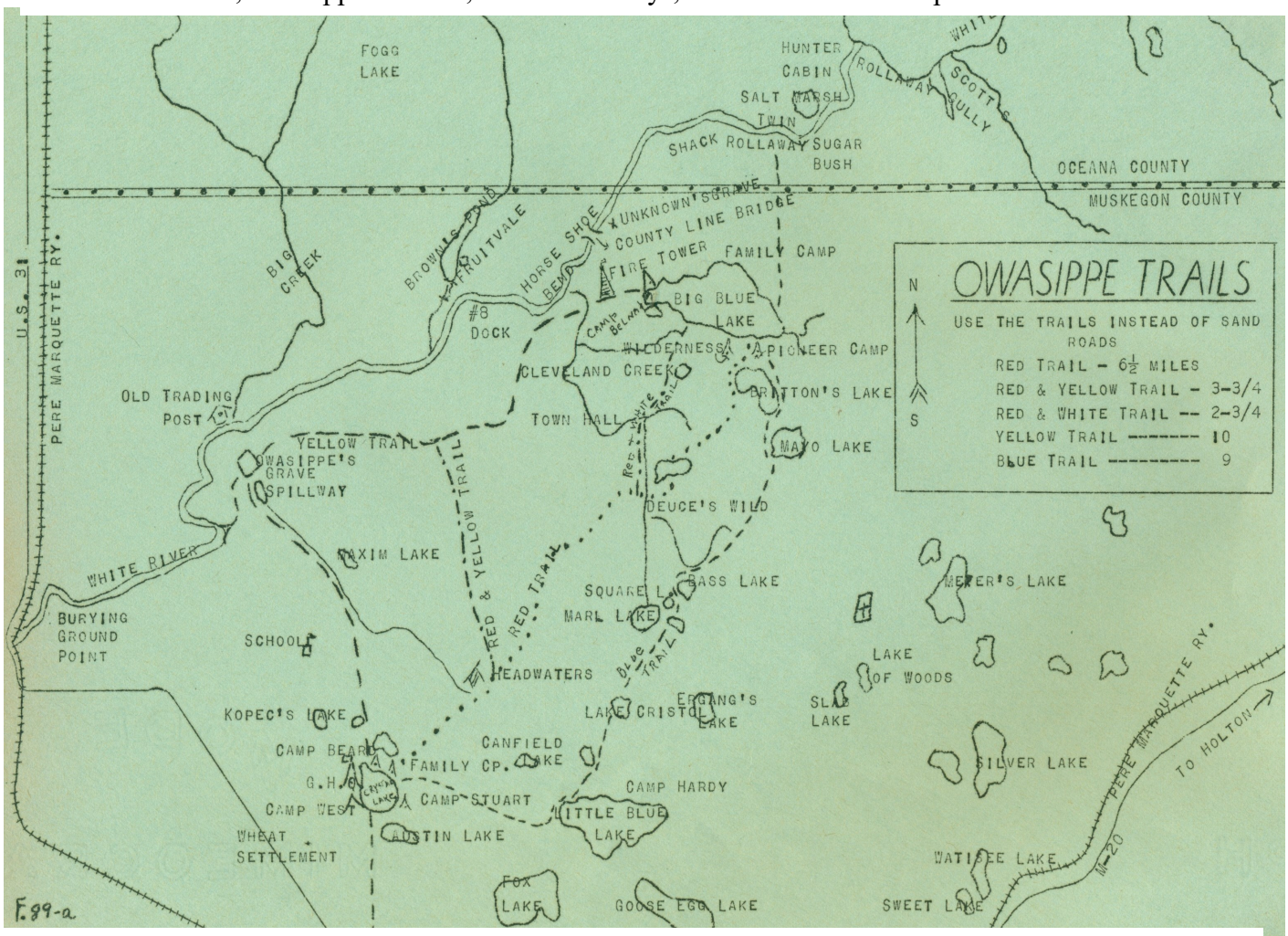
Tug O War's and camp contests

Treasure Hunts

On page 15, the Camp Directors reminisce about the past year. The Fourth of July celebration, treasure hunt and barbecues are mentioned. It's stated that these events will be repeated in the new season and be bigger and better than ever. Also mentioned is the Beauty Contest; bring make-up and special clothing. Venetian Night at the waterfront and scouts were encouraged to bring musical instruments to camp. It's fascinating how different the earlier camps were. Modern scouters may scoff at these types of activities at Boy Scout camp, but the boys had a lot of fun and came back for more year after year.

Hiking-The Owasippe Trails

The Owasippe Trails were created in the 1930's. They consisted of thirty-two miles of cross country trails. Many of the spots along the trails were connected to the legend of Owasippe, and it is claimed that the trails were created by old time Owasippe campers. This is a partial list of interesting trips: Deserted Cave, Deuce's Wild, Scott's Gully, Little Blue, Fire Tower, Spillway, Sugar Bush, Fossil's Pit, Trading Post, Wheat Settlement, Owasippe's Grave, Twin Rollaways, and Tamarack Swamp.



Yellow Trail: From Crystal Lake to Camp Belnap on Big Blue Lake
North from Crystal Lake to Silver Creek, along the south bank of the creek to the spillway, visit Owasippe's grave, then along the south bank of the White River to a point called, Petakay, which has a log house across the river. Follow to White Lock Dock #8. Then across Cleveland Creek past the Fire Tower and finally to Camp Belnap, on the west end of Big Blue Lake.

Red Trail: From Crystal Lake to Wilderness Camp on Big Blue Lake. Red Trail is sometimes called the Short Cut
Northeast from Crystal Lake to the Headwaters of Silver Creek, past Hercik's Farm and the old cemetery; then to Deuces's Wild on Cleveland Creek, past the west shore of Britton's Lake and finally to Pioneer Camp.

Blue Trail: From Crystal Lake in a round about way to Big Blue Lake.
This is one of the most beautiful trails , going past little Blue Lake, Lake Crystal, the Marl Beds, Square Lake, Bass Lake, Headwaters of Cleveland Creek, Mayo Lake and Britton Lake.

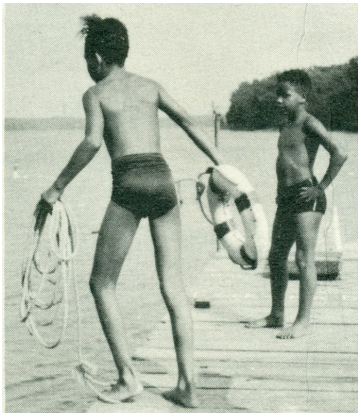
Red & Yellow Trail
Starts from the headwaters and follows along the Red Trail, going in a generally northerly direction, for about 3/4 of a mile. Then branches off to the west and goes in a northwesterly direction across country to Potakay, and joins with the Yellow Trail.

Red & White Trail
Branches off the Red Trail at Deuce's Wild and leads to Camp Belnap on Big Blue Lake.

The Waterfront

Waterfront activities were of the utmost importance at all the Owasippe camps. Even the lone troop camps like Hiawatha Beach, Pioneer & Wilderness had excellent swimming beaches.

In the past, a high percentage of adults were non swimmers. A major part of scouting included aquatic skills, but most boys coming to Owasippe were non-swimmers. Camp management realized that if a boy could learn to swim, something many parents couldn't, it would be recognized as a real achievement. Tens of thousands of boys learned to swim at Owasippe.



After learning to swim there was Lifesaving.

Who can forget the endless "buddy checks"? Scout swimming is always safety first.

There was nothing like a cooling splash or swim after a busy morning at camp.

"no running on the pier"

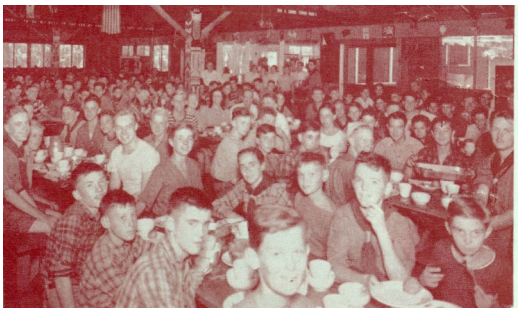
Beach tower at West built from a windmill circa 1940.

If you could swim, you could boat.

If you could boat, you could fish from a boat

The Dining Hall Experience

Taking meals in a dining hall was the Owasippe method of feeding scouts. This changed with the introduction of troop and wilderness camps, but eighty percent of scouts who ever attended Owasippe had a dining hall experience. In the early years when most council camps were getting a few dozen scouts to camp per period and using patrol cooking, Camp Owasippe/Dan Beard was feeding two hundred scouts in a large spacious dining hall. Owasippe camp leaders felt that there were so many things to do at camp, preparing food would consume too much of the scout's time. There was also the fun and fellowship of the dining hall, mingling with boys from other troops and meeting staff members on an informal basis, plus singing and program.



After a day of learning skills, hiking, swimming & outdoor activities, a sit down meal served hot on plates has a civilizing effect. We may sleep in the woods, but meal time was a modern-pleasant experience.

Good "Eats" at Camp Owasippe

Food was given a high priority at Owasippe. Here are typical meals taken at random from three days. Sunday July 11th-roast chicken and dressing, mashed potatoes and gravy, creamed peas, radishes, ice cream, cake and milk. Tuesday July 20th-Roast beef and gravy, browned potatoes, creamed peas, bread and butter, apple pie and milk. Friday August 6th-Baked fish, tomato sauce, spinach, bread and butter, apple pie and milk. *Who'd want to go home?*

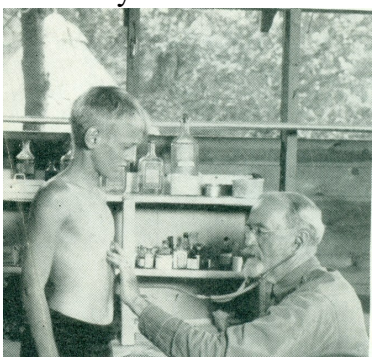
Food was promoted in camp literature with terms like "*good eats*", "*delicious and plentiful*". Early literature stressed that cooks were experienced "chefs" with restaurant experience. In later years, camp had to pass State of Michigan food service requirements.

In the early years, Owasippe cooks were African American men with restaurant experience. Many cooks seemed to have special relationships with the campers and staff. The back of the photo in the center has comments indicating how well liked these men were. "Best cooks in Michigan but watch out for ole John and his meat cleaver." Cooks were usually part of group camp photos. In later years, female cooks replaced men and some cooks were wives of staff members.

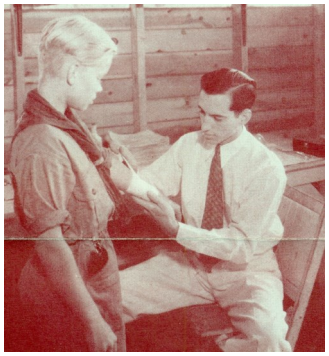
Health & Safety

With two hundred plus boys in attendance and sometimes nearly eight hundred at three camps on Crystal Lake, health and safety was of the utmost importance. A camp's reputation could be ruined by an outbreak of food poisoning or dysentery, or lives could be in danger by exposure to infectious diseases. In the earliest years, there was no expertise in the scouting community when it came to food service and safety. Few other scout camps fed two hundred boys in one sitting. The US military was one of the few organizations that had experience feeding large groups in near wilderness conditions. Chicago Council called on military men for guidance. A Chicago physician, Dr. Gentiles was the Camp Surgeon, he was also the Chairman of the Chicago Board of Health. In 1928, the BSA published a booklet entitled Camp Health and Sanitation, by then the Owasippe camps had been practicing Health and Safety at camp for over sixteen years.

1924



1936

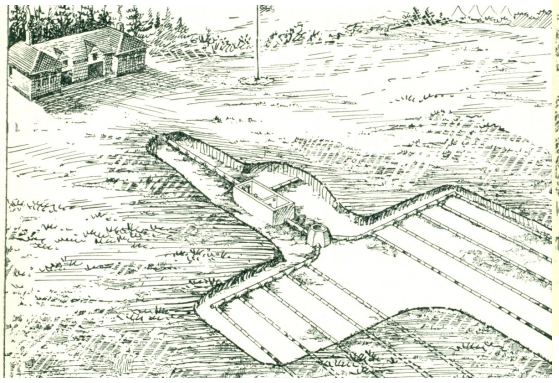


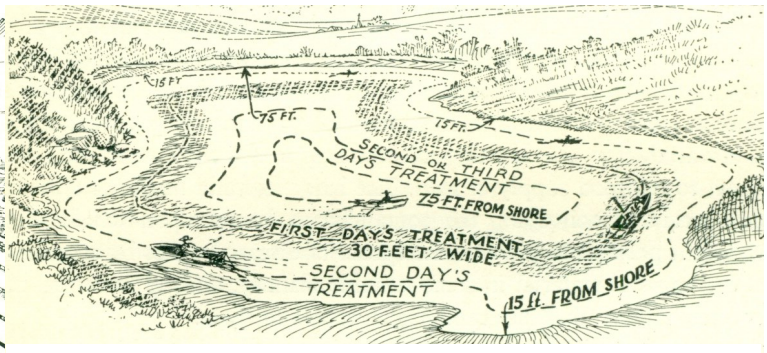
1950

There was a physician on staff and every camper received an examination upon arriving at camp. In later years campers needed a pre-camp medical check up which became another factor that added to the cost of camp. Each camp had a camp hospital later renamed the Health Lodge.

Camp Beard

Each dining hall had an open air dishwashing area adjacent. Dishwashers were usually junior staff members who were paid extra for serving a couple hours per day as dishwashers. Clean dishes and utensils were just as important as properly prepared, fresh wholesome food.



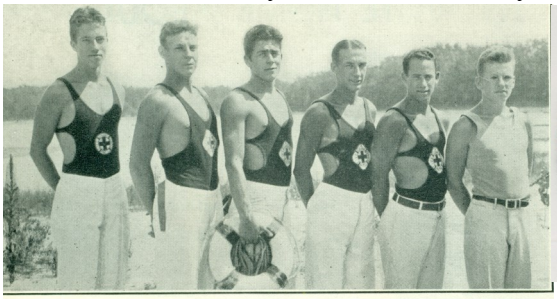


Treating a lake for the extermination of algae

Because of the size of the camps on Crystal Lake there were worries about pollution. In the 1930's camp management began agonizing over the tens of thousands of boys who had bathed in Crystal Lake and whether sewage had ever found its way into the lake. There were periodic worries about water levels and in the years the lake was low, it was tested weekly. Because of the diligence of Owasippe personnel, Crystal Lake stayed in excellent condition.

Camp Staff & Camp Administration

Camp organization established in the earliest years remained basically unchanged through the 1950's. The Council Executive was the Camp Chief and in smaller councils he was often involved in day to day camp operations. In a large council like Chicago, a Council Camping Director was in charge. He selected an overall Reservation Director and individual Camp Directors. The Reservation Director was often the Council Field Service Director or Assistant Scout Executive. The individual Camp Directors were usually District Executives. In the 1950's, volunteers replaced scouting professionals as Camp Directors. Individual staff members were recruited from council volunteers and were often teachers or individuals who had twelve weeks available during the summer. Program staff were usually college students and young men with Scouting experience. One photo of twenty staff members shows fourteen wearing Eagle medals. Counselors in training (CIT's) were unpaid staff members usually fifteen or sixteen years old.



You could always tell waterfront staff by their tans.

Staff members could be recognized by the unique camp emblem. The embroidered details in the badge were **green** and **red.** A 3" badge was worn on the uniform pocket or a 4" badge on a neckerchief

Uniforms in older photos that look white are usually old with the color washed out. The cooks are in white and the man with the tie is the camp doctor.

Staff members were veteran Owasippe Campers. These two young men are five year Honor Campers. Camp staff could be a great experience and some staff members came back for years or decades.

There's not much difference between the 1934 staff (above) and this 1950's staff. Two of the women are the cooks. The man in the white shirt is the camp doctor, and the third woman is the nurse.

Beginning in the late 1940's the camp staffs started making unique neckerchiefs.

The 1930's, Hard Times at Owasippe & Chicago Council Summer Camping

This is what Chief Camp Director Al Nichols said in 1936 about Owasippe in the depression

The economic depression struck Camp Owasippe in 1930. It became necessary to retrench in the face of shrinking attendance and income and certain camps had to be discontinued. Those with the smallest attendance and the furthest from central control, went first. Blackhawk was combined with Cheacaugau in 1932 and the next year both were discontinued. The Crystal Lake camps continued in operation and a less expensive type of camp was established at Big Blue in 1933. (Wilderness Camp)

By closing Blackhawk and Checaugau the council was subjected to not only a shrinkage of campers due to the poor economic times, but sustained a loss of morale on the part of the districts affected. This added to continued losses in attendance at camp. Camps are built around this othereal thing called "camp spirit", which is nothing more than camp traditions and ideals purposely fostered and harnessed to help effect the objects of Scouting in conduct of boys at camp. Leaders, even more than boys, took to heart the loss of their district camp and it affects the leaders even after that generation of campers had grown up and passed along.

The sharpest loss of 1930's depression was staved off by the gift of $10,000. for campership from the Chicago Tribune. But that simply meant that the next year a double dose had to be taken.

Two men with an idea stepped into the Chicago camping picture and carved their names into the totem pole of fame. J.D. (Daddy) Hickman and Harvey Ellord. These two men insisted that under the emergency conditions, the Stockyard District scouts could not get the advantages of camping at Owasippe, because of the cost factor. They stated that the money for any camping trip would have to be provided by someone, and they set out to get it.

Camp Kiwanis

The result was that in 1931 Camp Kiwanis was established as a summer camp for the boys of the old South Central (Stockyards) District. The camping committee was sympathetic, but in 1932 woke up to the realization that Owasippe could never hope to provide a camp experience for a certain portion of the Chicago scouting population unless their camp fees were subsidized in full or part. The continuing economic conditions merely added to the number of such boys.

This started camp scholarships for less-chance boys. Annually, since that first year, 750 to 1,000 boys have received all or part of their Camp Kiwanis fees from the Council fund of $1500.

In 1935 Camp Kiwanis was full and overflowing. In 1936 Camp Doddridge at Libertyville fell into our laps as a gift from heaven, from the Colonel Blair and the Katherine Kreigh Budd Memorial Home for Children. It's proposed use is not only for weekends, but also to meet the needs of more short term camping (five days to one week), for Chicago troops, at a nominal fee. Camp Doddridge should be fully operational in 1937.

Troops camped at Camp Doddridge 1937-1945

Camp Fort Dearborn is available for troops desiring to operate inexpensive Lone Troop Camps and Campinland in the Dunes, is available for troop that can provide tents with the council furnishing only a lifeguard and caretaker.

It was E.U. Goodman who began the push for more troop camping with home unit leadership at Owasippe. Goodman had been the Chief Scoutmaster of Troop 1 in Philadelphia. The troop was divided into three divisions, each with a Scoutmaster with Goodman serving as Chief Scoutmaster. The troop had numerous adult leadership positions including; Chaplain, Construction Chief, Commissary Department, Headmaster, Chief Surgeon, Signaling Chief, Handicraft Officer and an Adjunct/Quartermaster. When Philadelphia, Troop 1 attended Camp Treasure Island all they needed was a camp site. Goodman's idea of scout camping was formed as a result of his experience with Troop 1. Men like Goodman worked to insure that more troops could measure up to the quality of Philadelphia Troop 1, but the reality was often very different. Troops could attract boys but adult leadership was often a problem. Nonetheless, the BSA encouraged more troop camping with home unit leadership and efforts to promote troop camping began in earnest when Goodman became National Director of BSA Program. I came across this theme and I do not believe it has ever been explored. In modern scouting the troop attends camp and many weak troops simply don't attend camp. In the early years of scout summer camping this was not the situation. Weak troops had scouts who were interested in summer camp, these boys were welcomed at Owasippe (and many other council camps) in provisional units. In the modern era those scouts are usually denied the opportunity if the troop doesn't have adult leadership. At Owasippe individual scouts were welcome through the 1960's and attended camp in provisional units much the way they did in 1912.

Most of the historic photos of troops show large units with Eagle Scouts and numerous adult leaders. But, there were small troops often with poor leadership, with little equipment and meager resources.

Pictures like these help highlight the financial difficulties scouting faced. Middle and lower middle class boys wanted to be scouts but family funds were limited. In a 1935 Owasippe Guide Book the following statement appears; *The scout uniform should be worn at retreat and dinner, if you don't own a uniform a white shirt is recommended.*

I know of no other youth group that potentially denied boys attendance at summer camp because their local organization (troop) doesn't have adequate leadership. After 1931 it became national BSA policy that scouts should attend camp under home unit leadership. Some BSA summer camp enforced that policy. Chicago Council worked to strengthen the troop but Owasippe never denied a scout an opportunity for summer camp. There would be space for scouts who came without their troops in a provisional unit. He could have just as good a scout camp experience as the boy who attended with his troop.

Come alone or come with your Troop

The photo above is from Camp West circa 1921. I have examined it under magnification and thoroughly studied it. There are roughly 150 boys and I can not identify more than a handful of leaders. (6-8) Assuming that the camp staff consisted of five or six men, it seems that there were 150 boys in camp most without home unit leaders.

I have written elsewhere about how scouts were welcome at Owasippe as individuals, but the photo above spoke to me. There are about 125 scouts in the photo and standing in the rear are about 23 adults. In the staff photo (below) you can count 20 staff members. Could it be that there were only 3 or 4 unit leaders at camp with 125 scouts in 1934?

1934 Camp West Staff

There are 19 boys in this photo, but no leaders. Was this a provisional troop or a troop that came to camp without a leader?

Full Service-Partial Service Camps

To understand the camps at Owasippe, it's necessary to know the different types of camps.

PLAN No. 1

CAMPS:

Beard, Stuart, West, and Blackhawk.

CAMP PROVIDES:

Improved campsite, tent, cots, showers, dining hall meals, staff, latrine, boats, canoes, administration service, lantern, pails.

TROOP PROVIDES:

Unit and Patrol Leadership, personal equipment, planned program.

FEE:

Base Fee $27.00.

PLAN No. 2

CAMP WILDERNESS

CAMP PROVIDES:

Improved campsite, store with limited stock, dining hall and kitchen (big enough for 32 persons), small stove, small staff, adirondack shacks (hold 6 persons each), well, latrine, cooking utensils, boats, canoes, cots.

TROOP PROVIDES:

Food, ice, program, leadership, fuel, eating utensils (dishes and silverware), personal equipment.

FEE:

Base Fee $5.00.

PLAN No. 3

CAMP PIONEER AND HIAWATHA BEACH

CAMP PROVIDES:

Improved campsite, dining hall and kitchen, troop latrine, pump, tents, cots, pier, 2 canoes, 2 boats, cooking and eating utensils.

TROOP PROVIDES:

Food, ice, program, leadership, lantern, pails, kerosene, fuel, personal equipment.

FEE:

Base Fee $3.00.

PLAN No. 4

WHITE RIVER LUMBER CAMP

CAMP PROVIDES:

Improved campsite, dining hall, troop latrine, pump, 2 canoes, 2 boats.

TROOP PROVIDES:

Food, ice, program, leadership, fuel, stove, lantern, pails, tents, cots, personal equipment.

FEE:

Base Fee $1.50.

Yes – Let's ALL Go Camping This Summer

AT YOUR OWN LONE TROOP CAMP

If you've been a "Camping Troop" for many years perhaps it's about time to think of operating your own summer camp. If you haven't a site readily available why not think about one of the suggested trips—or utilize Wilderness Camp—or, for close to home spots, think of Campinland in the Dunes, or Camp Harrison or Camp Fort Dearborn, these latter two have cabins—at Campinland you'll need all of your own equipment. A Charter is essential and must be secured in advance, see the attached application. A book of helpful hints can be secured from the Camping Service.

Yes — Let's ALL Go Camping This Summer

CAMP FOR THE FUN OF IT • CAMP FOR THE ADVENTURE OF IT

BUT ABOVE ALL — CAMP — TO BE STRONG AND TRAINED FOR AMERICA!

HOW TO ATTEND OWASIPPE OR KIWANIS

Free Leadership for Troops

The "Troop Basis" is the *best* way to come to camp. The Camping Committee, recognizing this fact has made a special financial concession to both the adult Leader and the Scouts. For each Scout from the same Troop attending camp for a full period when the adult Leader is present, the Troop will be given credit for one eighth of the board fee of an adult Leader. On this basis, if a Troop has eight boys, a Leader goes free except for transportation. If a Troop has sixteen boys, a second Leader may also go free. However, if a Troop has only four Scouts attending, a credit on Leaders' board is given to the extent of 4/8ths of the Troop rate, etc. In addition, each Scout in Camp with this Leader will receive a rebate — see No. 9. An adult leader must be present for the entire period.

Leaders should be 21 years of age or older. Leaders may be Scoutmaster, Assistant Scoutmaster or Troop Committeeman from the Institution sponsoring the Troop. Leaders *must* be *at least* 18 years of age to be acceptable under this plan.

Leaders may not combine Troops for this plan unless from the same Sponsoring Institution.

Have a Patrol in Camp

The "Patrol Basis" is designed to encourage the attendance of new Troops and Troops inexperienced in summer camping wherever adult Leadership is not available. The *only* basis for acceptance—Group must *not* number less than four or more than eight, *including* the junior leader who must be sixteen or seventeen years of age. In camp they will be under the supervision of a provisional Scoutmaster. Only one such patrol per Troop will be accepted during the season at Owasippe or at Kiwanis and then only if there is to be no "Troop Reservation". The junior leader in charge will pay the same rate as the other Scouts. There is a special rebate on the Camp fee to all Scouts who attend under this plan—see No. 9.

Individual Scouts

Individual Scouts are welcome at Camp. The Scout is placed in a Provisional Troop—supervised by a resident staffman known as a Provisional Scoutmaster. Scouts who desire to stay in camp longer than the Troop or Patrol, may also register as "Individuals" for any number of additional periods.

The Un-Seen Side of Owasippe

Post cards and promotional pictures were made of the beautiful spots in camp but the seldom seen support side of operations was vital to a well run camp.

Tent platforms were 16' x 16' set on 8" cement blocks (Camping Committee members inspecting)

Canvas was hung over a frame. The sides could be rolled up on a warm day or rolled down in rain.

Ice houses were replaced with coolers in the 1940's .

In the modern era campers wanted bath houses with showers. These were expensive to build and maintain.

A pump house and fifteen thousand gallon water tower was built in 1937 which supplied water to all the Crystal Lake camps. Big Blue Lake had a similar system. The system cost $13,000 to construct; it failed in 1945 and a new five inch well was dug.

A full time caretaker oversaw operations, this was an important and well paid position. Part of the compensation was a house on camp property. The structure to the left was built in 1938. This position was later called the Ranger, and Owasippe had a staff of several local individuals who were called upon to help the Rangers when specialized skills were needed.

The Financial Side of Operation

With so many buildings and operating systems, a crew of local individuals had to be employed to keep everything in good condition and in the early years, harvest ice through the winter. Each structure had to be insured and there are instances when a building was destroyed, it was not replaced. In a 1935 insurance evaluation the depreciated value of the facilities at Owasippe was calculated at $88,000. If $88,000 doesn't sound like much, consider that the dining hall at Camp Beard carried an insurance value of $2,059. When the dining hall at Camp Checaugau burnt, the insurance money was applied to the operating expenses and Camp Checaugau was never re-built. As camping declined during the economic depression of the 1930's, it was impossible to recoup enough funds from camp fees to cover expenses. When a well failed or a roof was blown off, finding the money for repair or replacement was a problem. The problems multiplied as the facilities got older. Buildings needed new roofs, outhouses needed to be moved, boilers needed maintenance. A portion of the council operating budget was set aside for contingencies and as the camps got older, emergency repairs consumed all of the budget every year.

1937 Owasippe Staff

The 1937 camp-wide staff photo (above) shows about 116 individuals. This is a large number of people and even if some are unpaid volunteers they require food and lodging. Operating full service camps with a large staff administering program and preparing food is an expensive way to run a summer camp.

1918	One camp	753 boys
1919	One camp	775 boys
1920	"	609
1921	Two Camps	951
1922	Three camps	1055
1923	"	1258
1924	"	1690
1925	Four camps	2397
1926	Six camps	2550
1927	"	2340
1928	Seven camps	2811
1929	Six camps	2540
1930	"	2947
1931	"	2894
1932	"	1687
1933	Five camps	1327
1934	"	1670
1935	"	1822

Camp attendance figures for Owasippe

Camp attendance figures can vary widely from one source to another. These figures are from a 1937 Council Camping Committee document.

It illustrates how efficiently the single camp pre-1921 operated. If one camp served 775 scouts, three camps should serve three times that many, but they didn't. After studying these figures, some might question the wisdom of building so many camps.

I do not have dependable records for camp numbers after 1930. It is known that camping at Owasippe declined dramatically. Closing camps was the only logical option.

Much has been made in recent years about what a financial drain Owasippe is on the Chicago Council. My research has made me realize that it was always so. The problem today is that declines in membership and camp usage compound a problem that started in the economic depression of the 1930's, too many camps and facilities, too much operating overhead and not enough campers to cover the ever increasing operating costs.

Service to Camp

With so many facilities; dining halls, cabins, outhouses, ice houses, boilers and water systems, making camp ready in the spring and securing it to survive the ravages of winter was a huge undertaking. The term Camp Pioneer is used in publications and only through careful reading does one realize that Camp Pioneers are not those who camped at Camp Pioneer.

Camp Pioneers were a group of workers, usually scouting volunteers, occasionally paid workmen, that constructed new camps or who refurbished and prepared existing camps for summer. Camp work weekends can be dated back to 1928, but workmen have probably been going to Owasippe on lake steamers as soon as the ice was off Lake Michigan since the earliest years. At Spring Camp, scouts joined adults working at camp. In later years, the Order of the Arrow scheduled lodge work weekends at Owasippe (and Kiwanis) to help get camp ready for the summer.

Camp workers from the 1930's

Constructing a cabin

Scouter/laborers could be taught to put a roof on an outhouse and dig trenches for pipes, but specialized skills were required to repair a boiler or to connect tile. Skilled tradesmen were always needed at Owasippe and a list was kept of tradesmen-scouters.

Individual Scout and Unit Service to camp

As a requirement to earn the yearly numeral, scouts needed at least two hours of camp service and troops were expected to provide service to camp. To make it a "better place than they found it". These projects took various forms like a simple foot bridge over a gulley to repairing stairs or repainting a building. Some leaders returned to camp year after year with generations of Scouts. Pride was taken in camp service projects and there were plaques in camp noting this structure was built or repaired by Troop 838 in 1962. With troops thinking of camps or camp sites as their own, service projects took on special significance.

The Legend of Owasippe

From the 1919 camp promotion brochure

O-wa-sip-pe was one of the most beloved of the old Indian Chieftains, and many are the stories of his career. In one of their war expeditions, two young sons of Chief O-wa-sip-pe led the war party against their enemies, but the battle was against them and they never returned. The great loss grieved the old Chief so much that he is supposed to have died of a broken heart.

This version is from a 1940's publication entitled *Owasippe, It's Yarns and Legends*

In days when the White Lake region was first settled by white men (1840-50), a tribe of Pottawattamie Indians lived in the vicinity and had their village on Silver Creek (the Trout Stream) at a point near where the spillway is now. The chief of this tribe, who was a friend of the white man, was an old man by the name of Owasippe. Owasippe had married late in life and had two sons about fifteen and seventeen years of age.

It was a custom among the tribes that when a boy thought he was old enough and ready to be admitted to the tribe he was required to pass a manhood test. He would prove his courage, self reliance and woodcraft abilities. This test, which varied in details from tribe to tribe, consisted essentially of going out for a considerable period of time away from the tribe, frequently going into hostile territory, finding and preparing his own food and otherwise depending entirely on his own resources.
In Owasippe's tribe this test consisted of taking a canoe and scouting trip for a month.

Owasippe's two sons felt that they were ready to pass their manhood test and be admitted to the tribe, so arrangements were made. They packed their canoes with a few utensils and supplies and started out down Silver Creek, to the White River onto White Lake and into Lake Michigan and up toward the country of the Algonquin's in Canada.

As the time for their return drew near, Owasippe whose whole life was wrapped up in the boys was keyed up to a high point of anxiety and anticipation. Early in the morning on the day when they were due to return, he climbed the hill, behind his teepee and sitting there on an old fallen pine log at a point where he could command a view of Silver Creek down to its junction with the White River, he waited and watched for their return. All day long he waited for the canoe. At night, exceedingly anxious and worn, he returned to his village, only to renew his watch at daybreak. Day after day he waited thus, and as he waited his anxiety grew. Finally he refused to desert his post and sat there day and night. His faithful wife brought him food, but he ate less and less and finally after many days sank into a coma and died.

The canoe of the lads never appeared, and Owasippe was buried on the crest of the hill where he died. His grave is marked only by a sunken hole, mute evidence of a raid made by vandals several years ago when they stole the old chief's skull.

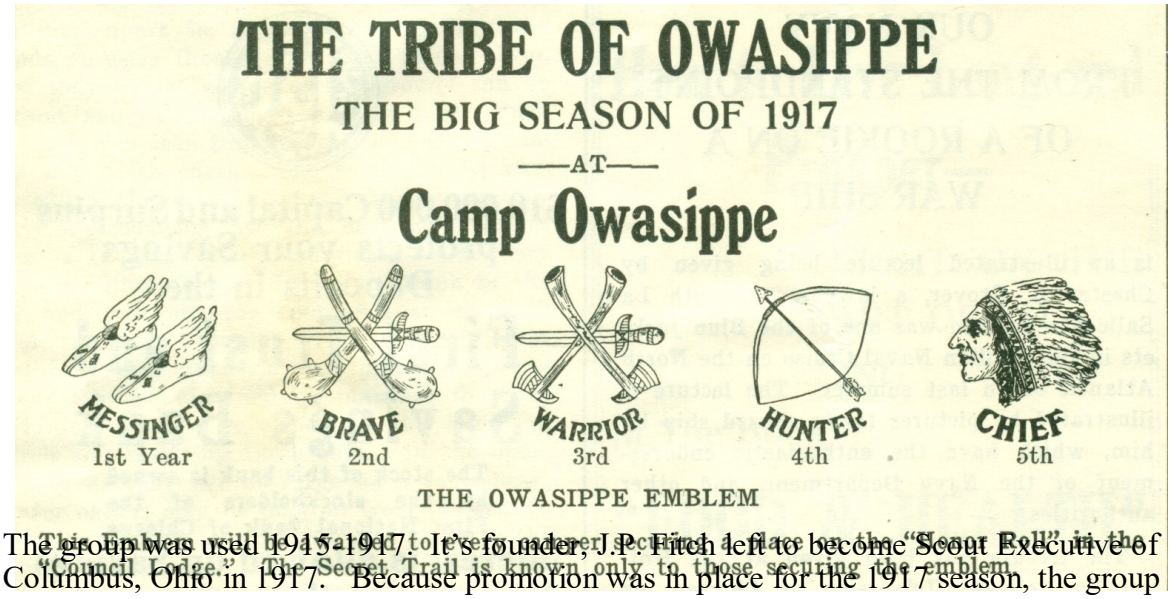
Scouts are asked to bring rocks whenever they visit this grave and place them on the earth so that in time this hole will be filled up and a mound will mark the spot where the old chief is buried.

The mystery of Owasippe's sons was not solved for many years. About thirty years after Owasippe's death, a boy fishing along the White River came to a point known as "Burying Ground Point," where there is a high bank. There had been a heavy rainstorm the night before and the boy discovered that a landslide had occurred there. He began exploring and discovered the bow of a birch bark canoe. He got friends to help him dig, and he unearthed the entire canoe and two skeletons of young Indian lads.

What had happened became apparent. The two sons of Owasippe had successfully completed their trip and were returning home. Arriving at Burying Ground Point less than a mile from their father's village and practically within sight, they were overtaken by one of the fierce storms which occasionally visit the region. While there, a landslide suddenly overwhelmed them, burying and crushing them in the canoe, and thus their remains stayed buried until uncovered years later.

The Great Tribe of Owasippe

The Great Tribe of Owasippe was formed in 1915 when North Shore District Secretary, J.P. Fitch was appointed Camp Director. It was about this time that the name Camp Owasippe was developed. Prior to 1915, the camp had been known as Camp White, The Chicago Scout Training Camp or Crystal Lake Camp. Fitch had come from Oklahoma and was reportedly familiar with various Native American traditions. In 1915, to go along with the new Native American theme, Chief White Wing was on camp staff working in camp craft. White Wing is identified as a full blood Winnebago Indian. In The Tribe of Owasippe, first year campers were Messengers, second year-Brave, third year-Warrior, fourth year-Hunter and fifth year-Chief. It is believed that insignia, in the form of pins similar to the designs below, were used.



The group was used 1915-1917. It's founder, J.P. Fitch left to become Scout Executive of Columbus, Ohio in 1917. Because promotion was in place for the 1917 season, the group continued, even though Fitch was gone. In the late teens, there were a number of groups vying for scout's attentions, and they were looked upon with disfavor by the National BSA. Various ideas and programs, some popular on a local basis, were popping up; Invincible Scouts, 4 M, Mystic Circle and various camp tribes. There was a growing controversy over what Boy Scout summer camp should be. I believe that the Tribe of Owasippe was discontinued because of the attitude that the camp program should not be diluted with extraneous material and partially because its founder, Fitch had left.

It has become my opinion, based on my research, that the name Owasippe was not used for the camp until 1915 and the camp was named as a result of the formation of the Tribe of Owasippe. I can't find the name Owasippe in any early Chicago paperwork until 1915. From 1915 through 1921 the name was spelled with hyphens, as if trying to help with the pronunciation of the new word, Ow-as-sipp-e.

In Thirteen Years of Scouting Adventure by Stuart Walsh, published in 1923, Walsh tells how native American legends were incorporated into camp lore in the early years. He states "*certain individuals had a knack for discovering Indian legends where none had ever been before.*" In studying various scout camps I've been struck by the similarity of the Native American legends. Camp Eagle was named for Chief Eagle near Elkhart, Indiana and the chief was reportedly buried on camp property. When the camp moved south of Elkhart, Chief Papakitchee became the legend of Camp Pioneer Trails and by coincidence, Chief Papakitchie's grave was near the camp. Hundreds of scout camps have an Indian Chief incorporated into their early camp lore. In his book, Walsh states "*that with the way scouting was growing (in 1923) it didn't seem there would be enough Indian Chiefs to allow every scout camp to have one, much less one buried on camp property."*

The Order of the Arrow at Owasippe

Election to the Order of the Arrow became the highest camp honor. The lodges at Owasippe were founded by Carroll Edson, the co-founder of the WWW in Philadelphia. In the early years, pre-1927 candidates were selected from boys who had been recognized as Honor Campers, by the camp staff. In 1927 E. U. Goodman, the other founder of the WWW in Philadelphia, became the Chicago Executive and the procedure was changed. But it wasn't like the modern procedure. Names of candidates were supplied by troop leaders and submitted to camp leaders for approval. A vote was conducted in the troop and scouts were selected. With many boys at camp in provisional units, arrow candidates were often nominated by leaders and elected by scouts who only knew them for a week.

The OA was everywhere in camp. The lodge and chapter chiefs were often camp staff members. Most of the staff were arrow-men. The OA conducted the welcoming camp fire; elections and the Ordeal were held in camp. The tap-out (selection ceremony) was held at a camp wide campfire. It was an impressive event with arrow-men crossing the water in a canoe, lighting the campfire and selecting candidates. Membership in the Order of the Arrow was a high honor and all Owasippe campers aspired to become arrow-men.

Prior to 1929, each camp had its own Lodge, chartered by the Grand Lodge to the individual camp. In 1929, the camp lodges consolidated into a single lodge, chartered to the Chicago Council.

Moqua	Wakay	Garrison	Checaugau	Blackhawk	Takodah
Camp West	Camp Beard	Camp McDonald	Camp Checaugau	Camp Blackhawk	Camp Belnap
South Shore	North Shore	Southwest	Northwest	West Side	Douglas

After camps started closing in 1932, chapters were less connected with the camps, especially Checaugau and Blackhawk, whose camps had closed.

In 1954, the old chapters were realigned to coincide with the district reorganization that occurred in 1949. The Order of the Arrow was no longer a camp operation and the new chapters functioned under authority of the individual districts with supervision by the District Committee.

For more information about Owasippe Lodge, see Owasippe the Lodge by Paul Myers

Camp Achievement the "Numeral" & "O"

Earliest numerals were felt sewn on felt embroidered small size embroidered

The Owasippe Camper *Those scouts whose record at camp is such that they have done all that is expected of a camper with spirit, activities, advancement and service will receive their "numeral" as an Owasippe Camper. These honors (numerals) are awarded by joint conference of the*

1921-23 **1924-28** **1928-32 1935-39** **1933-34**

Honor Camper *Those campers who not only bore their full share of the camp responsibilities but have also made a definite contribution to the welfare and the spirit of the camp and have displayed at all times a spirit of helpfulness, will receive the O of the Honor Camper.*

The blank space beneath the O with the bottom of the Chiefs neck and hair cut off was the place that the small numerals (1933-1934) were to be sewn. The badge was unpopular and only used for two years.

Screen print

embroidered

Scouts who have received the Honor Camper O in previous years will receive a bar to put beneath their O to indicate additional years of award. Awards will be determined by the Senior Council.

Where to wear Owasippe insignia. Printed material states that the Owasippe O and other camp honors were originally to be worn on the camp beanie. Later a neckerchief was substituted for the beanie. In the photo to the left a Scout wears insignia on his sleeve. There are other individuals with Owasippe insignia on their sleeves in the larger photo and individuals can be identified in other photos with Owasippe insignia on their sleeves. I do not believe it was a wide spread practice, but the photo clearly shows that badges were worn by some in this manner.

Green segments were used 1940 through 1958
There are varieties in the green color of the segments, they match the different shades of the Owasippe badges.

Camper- "O"s (earned) to keep those previously recognized with the Honor Camper O active, specialty "earned" honors were available in the fields of Aquatic, Handicrafter, Hiker, Nature & Owasippe Chief. Colored pieces of felt worn behind the O indicated these achievements. The Owasippe Honors program changed in 1940; any camper could work on the camp themes and the subjects were expanded. The earned camp honors recognition continued in the form of segments.

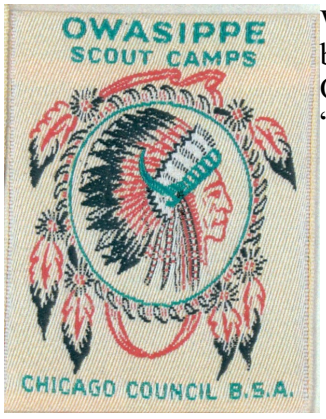
Owasippe insignia 1940-1961

1940-unique design "no mouth" | 1946-unique design "face not embroidered" | 1948-lines in face are embroidered | 1950's-lines in face are **not** embroidered

Number 1 & 2 are on noticeably darker green cloth. Earlier segments are also on darker cloth.

The numeral program continued after the badge design changed in 1940. This style ran from 1940-1957. Some years are "over" and other years "under" to fit around the camp badge. Yearly numerals were earned.

There is controversy regarding a 1958 segment. The new woven series of badges was introduced in 1958. A 1958 green & gold segment exists, but it is believed to be from Camp Indian Mounds of the Milwaukee Council.



Woven emblems were used 1958-1960. They were unpopular, partially because they were fragile but also because they interrupted the segments. Old time Owasippe campers were proud of the circle of years around their "O" and the woven emblem and rectangular segments didn't fit.

The 50th Anniversary 1961 An embroidered badge with a cut edge border replaced the woven for the 50th anniversary. A special oversize segment with the anniversary dates was used only in 1961.

Segments changed to match the new badge. 1961 segments can be distinguished from later ones by the darker green color.

In later years, a green segment was developed for Voyageur, but it was not available in 1961.

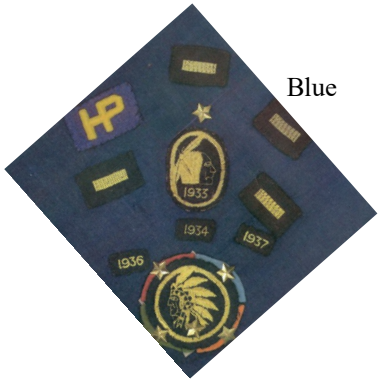
Camp & District Beanies-Camp Color

Camp beanies, also called skull caps or dinks, were used in the earliest years. Owasippe beanies have a color code to identify the camps. You could recognize what camp a boy was from if you knew the color code. The colors of the beanies corresponded with the colors of the district neckerchiefs. In the early years since summer camp was conducted along district lines, it's possible that the camp beanies could be district insignia as well.

Dan Beard-Green & White
James E. West-Blue & White
McDonald-Purple & White
Blackhawk-Red & White
Checaugau-Maroon & White
Beanies were discontinued by the late 1920's.

Troop neckerchief sponsored by Armour (meat)

Black



Blue

Purple

Camp/District Neckerchiefs

Honor's booklets state that the O is to be worn on the back corner of the scout neckerchief with the bar (repeat) to be worn under the O (on the neckerchief). Often the neckerchief is black with red details which I had always believed was the Owasippe neckerchief, but can not confirm. Districts used color neckerchiefs as late as 1948. This explains why Owasippe O's could be found on different colored neckerchiefs. A **maroon** neckerchief from **Northwest District** would be worn by a Checaugau camper. A **red** neckerchief from **West Side District** would be worn by a Blackhawk camper. A **purple** neckerchief from **South West District** would be worn by a McDonald camper. A **blue** neckerchief from **South Shore District** would be worn by a Camp West camper and a **Green** neckerchief from **North Shore District** would be worn by a Dan Beard camper. These color codes held true when each district had its own camp, but

Owasippe Contingent & Sub-Camp Insignia

The Wilderness and Pioneer Camp badges shown on page 14, are the only known sub-camp badges. I know of no badges ever issued by Camp Beard, West, McDonald/Stewart, Checaugau or Blackhawk. Don't confuse the various camps with the name Blackhawk with the Owasippe Blackhawk. Numerous badges exist from the Aurora, IL. Council, Camp Blackhawk. The Owasippe camp rivalries were intense and yet there are no badges to distinguish one camp from another. Everyone seems to have been content with the "regular" Owasippe badge.

Camp Achievement-Belt Stencils

In the early years, merit badges could only be earned by First Class Scouts. To keep boys active at camp, emphasis was placed on small projects with recognition in the form of a stencil on the scout belt.

Camp Honors

TOTEM BELT—On the plan as used for some years at Camp Dan Beard and other camps, campers will have the right to have appropriate symbols painted on their scout belts indicating their various achievements at camp. Every camper will be able to earn several of these awards.

1. The first mark given will be a large **Roman Numeral in Red,** indicating the number of seasons attended camp.

Vouched for.....Date.....

2. This will be followed by a small **Arabic Numeral in Black,** indicating the year.

Vouched for.....Date.....

3. The third mark will indicate the individual camp attended as, West, McDonald, Dan Beard, Checaugau, Blackhawk or Bel-nap. Each camp has its own design.

Vouched for.....Date.....

4. An Owasippe Honor Camper will rate an **Orange Indian Head with Chief's War Bonnet.** Black bars will be added for successive years.

Vouched for.....Date.....

5. Members of the Order of the Arrow will be indicated by a **Red Arrow** pointing in a special direction indicating the degree attained as first or second.

Vouched for.....Date.....

6. Satisfactory Camper will rate a **Tent** outlined with the large Arabic Numerals on either side indicating the year; as "26" in **Orange** color.

Vouched for.....Date.....

7. **White Indian Tepee** is a special marker given to the junior leader, who has demonstrated outstanding leadership qualities during the period (to be judged by senior camp staff.)

Vouched for.....Date.....

8. **Blue Swastika** will be given to any Scout who shows outstanding record for volunteer service. This award is given only by camp director or assistant in conference with senior staff.

Vouched for.....Date.....

9. **A Broken Red Bar** will be given for having served as Officer of the Day.

Vouched for.....Date.....

10. **A Broken White Bar** will be given for having served as Officer of the Guard.

Vouched for.....Date.....

11. **White Life Preserver** with **Red** marks will be given to Scouts who qualify in life saving tests and have been members of the life guard. Must be recommended by swimming instructor.

30. **Ped Hiker's Boot** given for Scouts going on an organized, overnight hike with hikemaster. Hiking distance must be not less than 20 miles.

Vouched for.....Date.....

31. **Trail Marker's Sign** in **Red** given to Scouts who set up twelve signs on approved trails. Must be legible, useful and done without destruction to live vegetation.

Vouched for.....Date.....

32. **White Eagle Feather** given for winning first place in camp athletics, swimming meet or scoutcraft meet. Recommended by activities director.

Vouched for.....Date.....

33. **Blue and Red Mottled Fools' Stick** given for Scouts taking an outstanding part in a circus, minstrel show or other camp entertainment recognized by directors.

Vouched for.....Date.....

34. **Yellow Trophy Cup** given to Scouts at table winning the most table honors per period.

Vouched for.....Date.....

35. **Two Crossed Frying Pans** in Black given to Scout who has successfully cooked four outdoor meals for others.

18. **Yellow Second Class Pin** given for completing second class tests while at camp.

Vouched for.....Date.....

19. **Yellow First Class Pin** given for completing first class tests while at camp.

Vouched for.....Date.....

20. **Blue Arrowhead** given for completing three merit badges in one period at camp.

Vouched for.....Date.....

21. **Yellow Star** given when a Scout has passed any five merit badges while at camp.

Vouched for.....Date.....

22. **White Anchor** given for Scouts completing the boatmanship test (recommended by camp boatman.)

Vouched for.....Date.....

23. **White, Red and Blue Bird** given for three degrees of bird study.

Vouched for.....Date.....

24. **White, Red and Blue Butterfly** given for three degrees in study of insect life.

Vouched for.....Date.....

25. **White, Red and Blue Flower** given for three degrees in study of wild flowers.

Vouched for.....Date.....

26. **White, Red and Blue Leaf** given for three degrees in tree study.

Vouched for.....Date.....

27. **Handicraft Design in White, Red** and Blue to be given for completing respectively 1st, 2nd and 3rd degrees in special handicraft work such as leather-designing, rope-weaving, basketry, knife work, etc.

Vouched for.....Date.....

28. **Fire Axe and Pail** given to Scouts who have actually and intelligibly taken part in fighting a real forest fire while at camp.

Vouched for.....Date.....

29. **Blue Hiker's Boot** with **VX** given to Scouts completing hiking merit badge while at camp.

Vouched for.....Date.....

36. **Red Fire-by-Friction Drill** given to any Scout who has made fire-by-friction out of native materials collected by himself while at camp.

Vouched for.....Date.....

37. **Red Campfire** given to Scout for laying six kinds of campfires, making drawing of same and giving description in his camper's manual. This is to include the making and use of a fuzzstick.

Vouched for.....Date.....

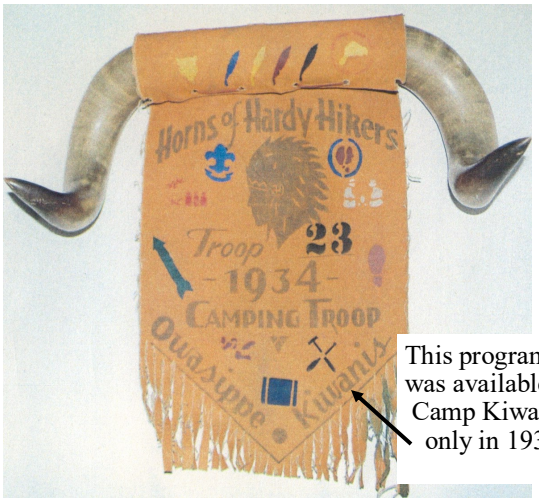
38. **White Council Fire with Two Scouts** given for an exceptional camp song, ceremonial, campfire program, game or the like devised and presented by the Scout or Scouts.

Vouched for.....Date.....

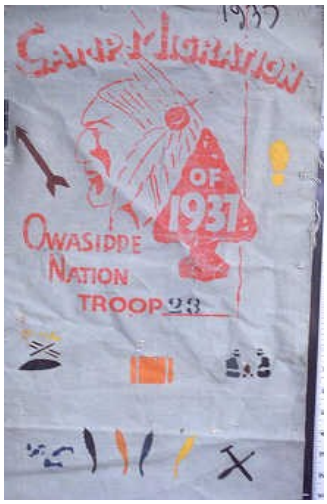
Patrol & Troop Recognition

Patrols and Troops could earn recognition. The first form of recognition was colored ribbons displayed on a tent post. A red ribbon for satisfactory, blue for winning a competitive event, black for failing tent inspection and a yellow ribbon when some particularly "bone head" stunt occurred.

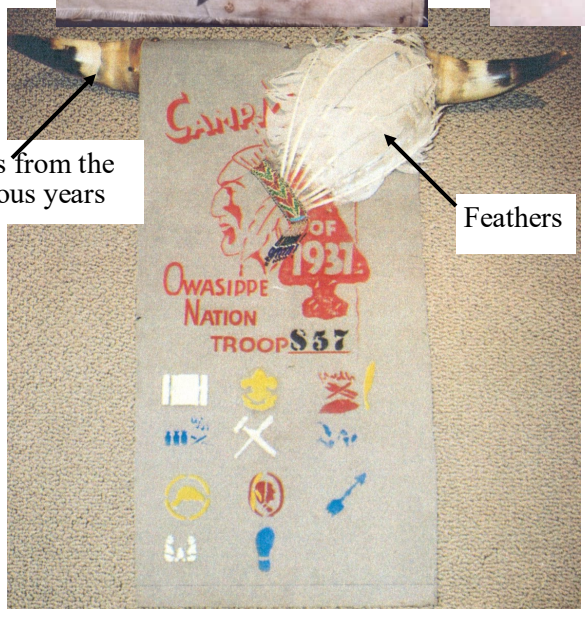
Beginning in the 1930's "Hides," sometimes called buckskins (actually canvas) were awarded to troops and patrols. The hide sometimes followed a camp promotion theme. To receive the hide, a troop must have at least two thirds of the boys who attended camp the previous season register for the new year. Once in camp, stencils were applied to the hide for various achievement. The troop awards were used into the 1950's but patrol awards seem to have been less popular.



This program was available for Camp Kiwanis only in 1934

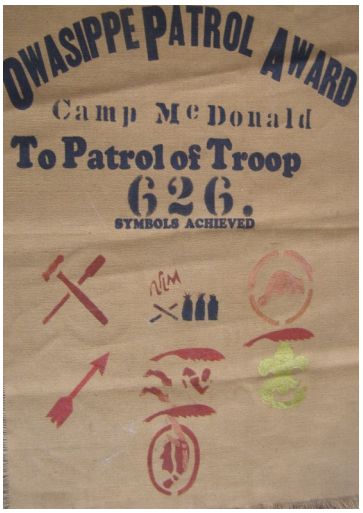


Some years the hides made use of the yearly camp promotion themes. Horns of the Hardy Hiker, Camp Rush of '36 and Camp Migration of the Owasippe Nation were slogans used in the various years.



Horns from the previous years

Feathers



Patrol Awards

THE OWASIPPE TROOP AWARD

Presented to those home troops attending camp under their own leadership who obtain the required minimum number of objectives. The award is an attractively designed canvas. On this award the troop will be given the privilege of stenciling the achievements of the troop while in camp.

This award is presented to the troops in the name of the several chapters of the Owasippe Lodge, Order of the Arrow. Just as membership in the Order is the highest honor to which a Scout can attain in camp, the troop award bearing a complete set of symbols is the highest honor to which a troop can achieve and bears witness to the fact that the troop has had a full, well-rounded program for its Scouts.

THE GOALS AND THE SYMBOLS USED TO REPRESENT THEIR ACHIEVEMENT ...

The outstanding troop will achieve all of these. This award will only be presented provided the troop has attained at least six of the following goals:

CAMP DUTIES

A satisfactory rating in the conduct of the troop's daily duty assignment, and in the mess hall cleanup.

TROOP CAMPFIRE

Given to those troops conducting a troop campfire during the period

OVERNIGHT HIKE

To the troop that has had 90% of its members on an overnight hike during the period. The hikes may be by the troop making a hike, or by individuals accompanying official camp hikes.

Plan and make up written hike program or conduct Patrol Camp-O-Rall.

DAY HIKE

To the troop which has conducted an afternoon hike or day hike with 90% of its membership in attendance as a troop.

PATROL SYSTEM

To the troop which has its Scouts actively using the patrol system with active patrol leadership.

SERVICE

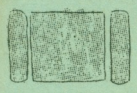
For satisfactory work on a project for the improvement of the camp made by the troop. This project should be approved in advance.

PARTICIPATION IN CAMP SOCIAL LIFE

To the troop which contributes a stunt at a campfire or other camp activity.

INSPECTION

To the troop which maintains an average for the period in the daily camp and equipment inspection equal to a 96% score and a satisfactory rating in personal inspections as conducted.



SWIMMING MEET

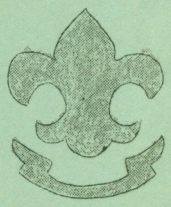
If meet is conducted, awarded to troop having 40% of its Scouts in camp participating.

SCOUTCRAFT MEET

When meet is conducted, awarded to troop having 60% of its Scouts in camp participating.

ADVANCEMENT

To troops having 70% of their Scouts in camp achieve satisfactory advancement during the period. Satisfactory advancement shall be construed as meaning the individual passing of at least three Second or First Class tests, or two Merit Badges during the period.

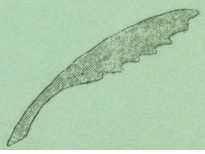


CAMP HONORS

To the troop having 70% of its members in camp achieve the camp numerals or Owasippe "O" during the period.

COLORED FEATHER

This feather may be placed over the particular symbol to indicate that the troop achieved the particular honor with 100% average, or made place in an event.



Camp Promotion

The very idea of camp promotion originated in the Chicago Council for Owasippe. Most camps were on the outskirts of the town where the council had its headquarters. In some cases scouts could take public transportation to camp. Having the camp in close proximity to the community was especially important in the early years when few families had capable vehicles and when good roads were a rarity. The "family night" was an event begun in the earliest years of scouting, but it never caught on at Owasippe. At other camps families could visit and delight in the boys achievements at camp but Owasippe was a long way from Chicago. The average family could not afford ship or train passage to visit their son. An unhappy camper could not be whisked home by visiting parents and leaving camp early would be a financial burden on the family. Owasippe faced situations that most scout camps did not.

The very idea that a twelve year old boy could be happy away from home, on a distant shore where the parent usually could not visit for two weeks needed to be carefully explained. Owasippe had many amenities not available at other camps and part of the reason for this may have been to help make the camping experience more civilized. Lodging (sleeping on a mattress on a spring bed) and dining in a well appointed hall with first class food could help take the wilderness out of the woods. Boys from communities outside the city, like Kankakee or Joliet, could experience the outdoors at the edge of their towns. They might hike along a river or visit a farm. Chicago boys from Rogers Park, Hyde Park or the Stock Yards might have never seen a woods or a river. A weekend camping trip to Camp Shabbona at the end of the street car line was one thing but two weeks in the Michigan wilderness was another. It could be a scary proposition; taking a ship across the lake, hiking into the woods to your camp and the whole time the older boys talking about the dreaded snipes.

Owasippe needed to be carefully explained and the council met the challenge with beautifully prepared promotional material. The quality of the leadership was constantly stressed, the quality of accommodations and meals were carefully explained. Scouts would never be bored or homesick with so many things to do. Everything about Owasippe was fun and exciting with many of the amenities of home and maybe the food was even better.

Camp promotion changed in the 1930's and the challenge became more difficult. Prior to the depression, Owasippe might be considered expensive but many families could afford it, they just needed to understand the camp experience was worth the cost. After 1930 many families had a difficult time affording Owasippe, yet the council had camps that need to be filled to be economically viable. This was a problem that was different and unique from other council camps. The council camps for Bloomington, Peoria, Indianapolis or Kalamazoo were at the edge of town. If camp wasn't full, some of the camp sites were closed, less staff was employed and volunteers might come to camp for a day or two to help out. Owasippe had five camps with five staff's and five dining halls and it was more difficult to cut expenses. The logistics of opening and closing camp required a trip across Lake Michigan or a five hour train ride. The circumstances at Owasippe were unique.

Perry Lint, the new Scout Executive in 1931, inherited these difficulties from E.U. Goodman. Al Roberts remained the Director of Program/Camping and at Lint's urging began seeking new ways to promote Owasippe. They came upon the idea of using the OA. Prior to this time the OA had been a fraternal organization; active at summer camp, holding ceremonies and inducting new members. The Owasippe chapters accumulated sizable treasuries generated by dues, but the chapters didn't have much to do. Lint challenged the OA to become leaders in camping and especially in promoting camping at Owasippe. Chapter treasuries helped print promotional literature, fund improvements at camp and sponsor camperships. In the modern era, arrow-men have taken on a role in camp promotion, but it started at Owasippe in the 1930's.

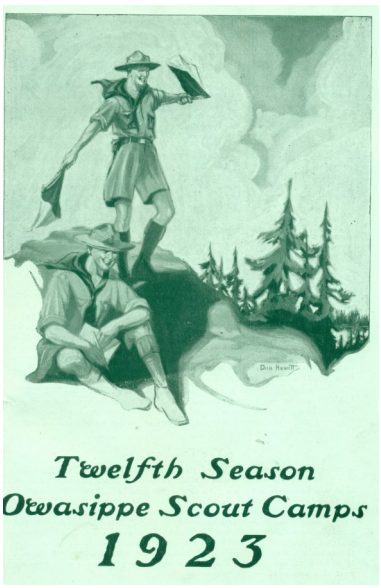
52

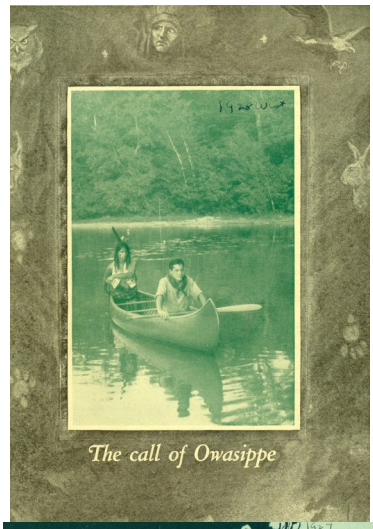
Camp Promotion

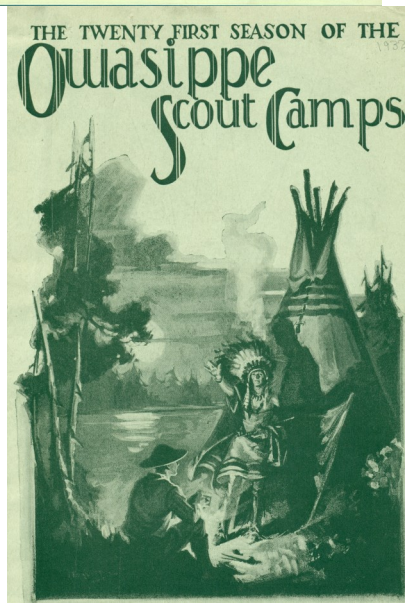
The Chicago Council faced challenges in getting boys to camp. In the earliest years the very idea of camping needed to be explained. Few organizations used an outdoor experience in their program. This point can not be overemphasized; camp would be the first trip away from home for many boys. The other challenge was assuring scouts parents that their son would be safe and have fun at a camp across Lake Michigan, sleeping in a tent in what seemed like the wilderness for two weeks, in many cases with other scouts they did not know.

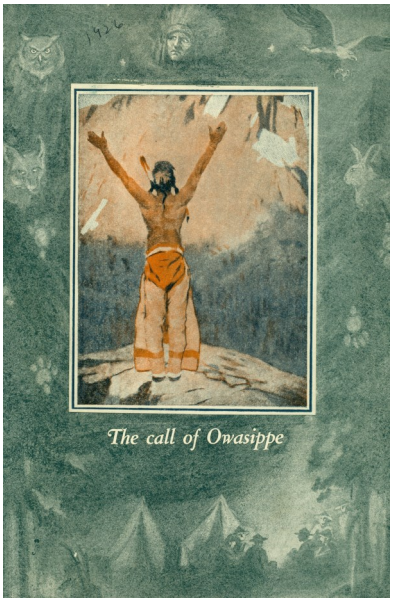
Yearly camp themes were developed and there is a myriad of printed material explaining and extolling the virtues of Owasippe. Chicago Council excelled in the publication of high quality camp promotion material. I know of no camp with the quality of material of that used for Owasippe.

Pin back buttons were used 1933-1937. After you registered for camp you received the button to wear on your uniform.









53

In the early years, the idea of "camping" was new. Scouting came on the scene at the time the outdoor movement was taking form. Celebrities like Henry Ford and Thomas Edison went "camping" and extolled the benefit of the fresh air and nature. The National Parks and the forest preservation movement was developing. Wealthy individuals from Chicago were taking lake steamers to vacation homes in Michigan, but now the sons of managers and maybe even working men could enjoy the woods. It was a splendid idea, but one that had to be explained to parents.

To parents

Some Reasons Why

A Period at Owasippe Will Pay Dividends to Your Son

Because superficial city life often kills the best that is in a boy. In camp, he can taste once again the simple life of his sturdy forefathers.

Because it will provide some wholesome changes—new scenery—new things to do and think about—new faces, friends, experiences, obligations, and activities.

Because camping undoubtedly sends the boy back to school keener mentally, stronger physically, socially, and morally.

Because a boy has in his blood the "wanderlust", a compelling instinct. Organized camping is a safe outlet.

Because it will give first hand contact with nature, birds and butterflies; flowers and trees; streams and hills; and the animals of the woods. All of these experiences help to teach the life story.

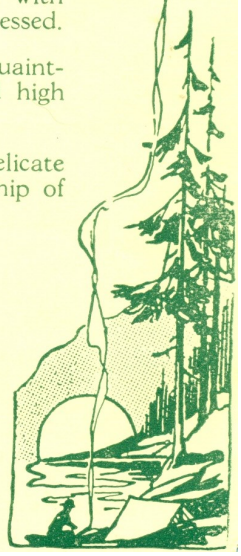
Because he will have ample opportunity to sit by the flower that "blossoms by night," the campfire. Here in quiet, with mind eager and receptive, the great lessons are impressed.

Because it will be a chance to freely mingle and form acquaintances with other boys and men of good character and high ideals.

Because the boy finds that in his association with the delicate wild flowers, the solitude of the woods, the companionship of the birds, and the miracle of the stars, he is in close contact with God. He cannot help but feel a greater responsibility to his Creator. The boy who goes camping finds Him everywhere.

Because the most powerful stimulation, the strongest reactions, are the result of quiet, unhurried thought and convictions.

Thousands of Parents Who Know, Subscribe to the Above



Troops LET'S GO! Scouts

OWASIPPE CAMPS

Season 1922 opens June 26

HIKES GAMES CAMPFIRES
SWIMS EATS OUTDOORS

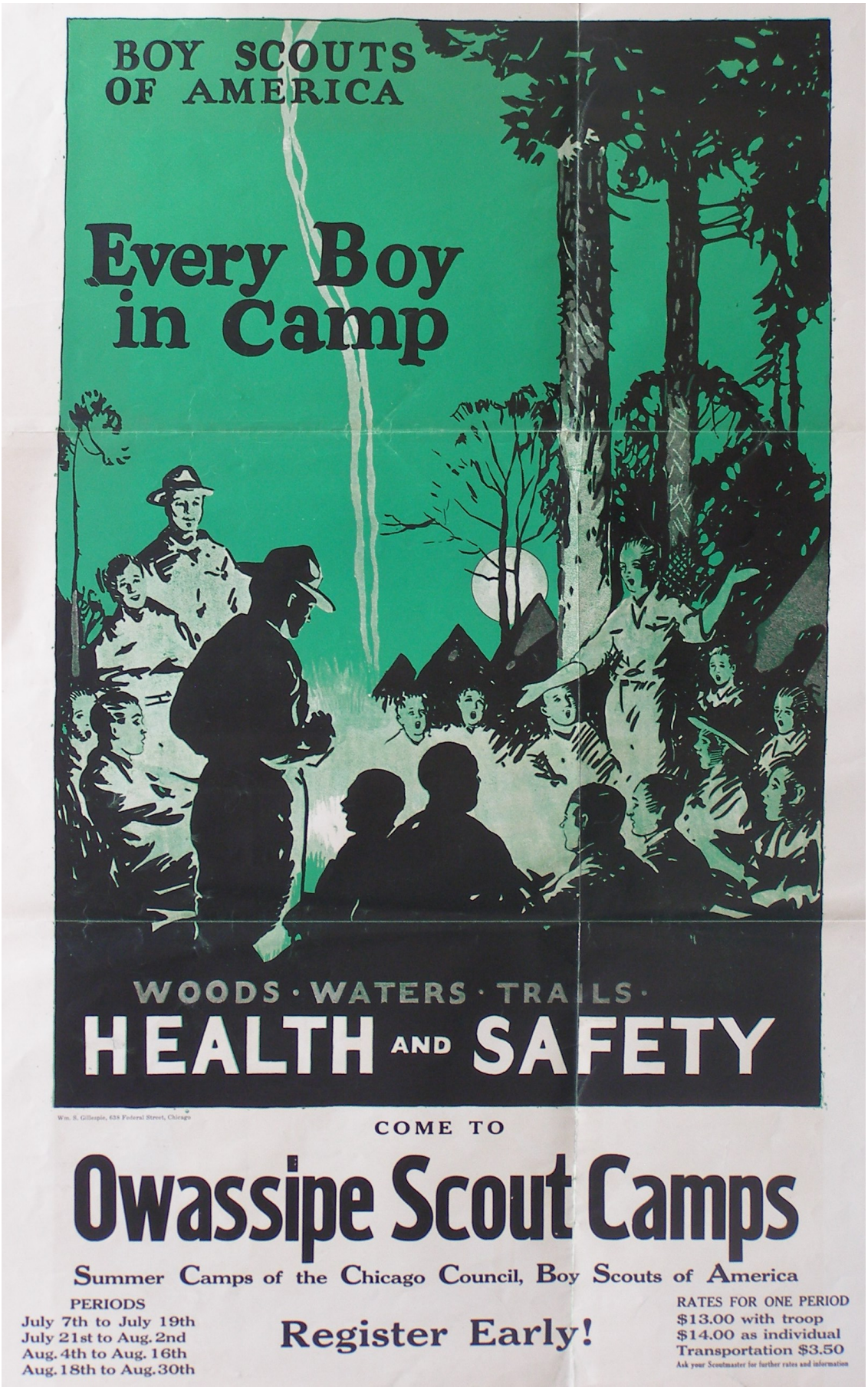
O Boy!

CAMP JAMES E. WEST
South Shore & Calumet

CAMP McDONALD
South West, Stock Yards & Central Mfg. District

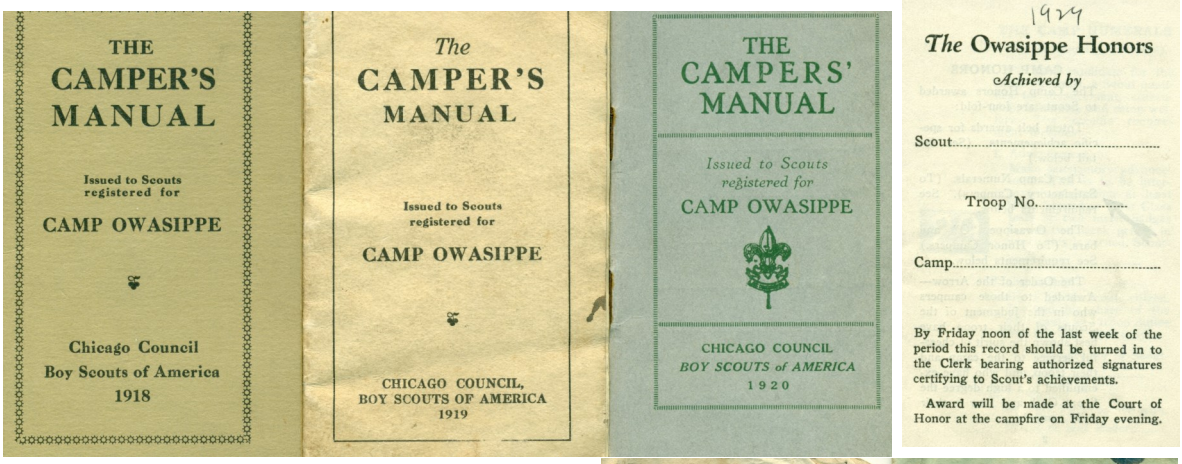
CAMP DAN BEARD
North Shore & West Side

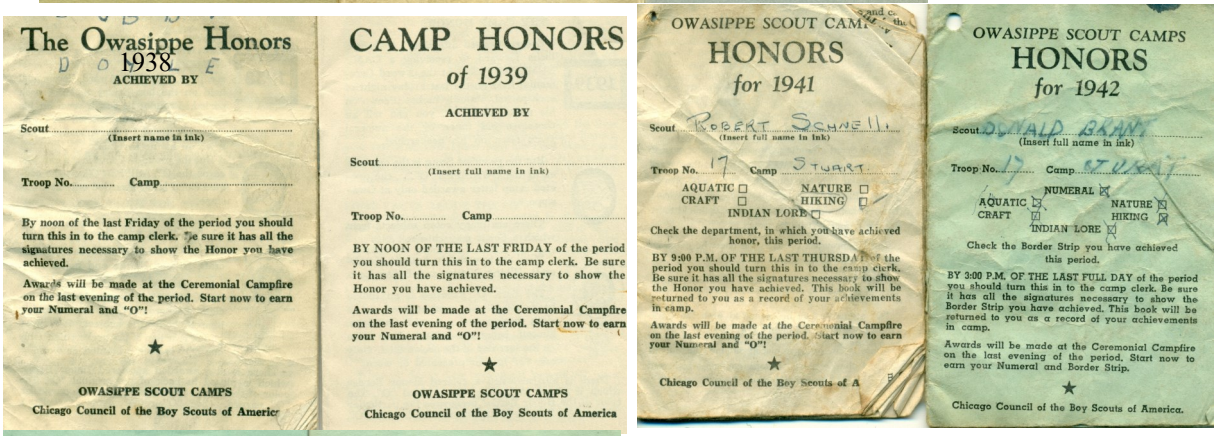
Under the Direction of Chicago Council, Boy Scouts of America, 203 So. Dearborn St. Telephone Wabash 9315

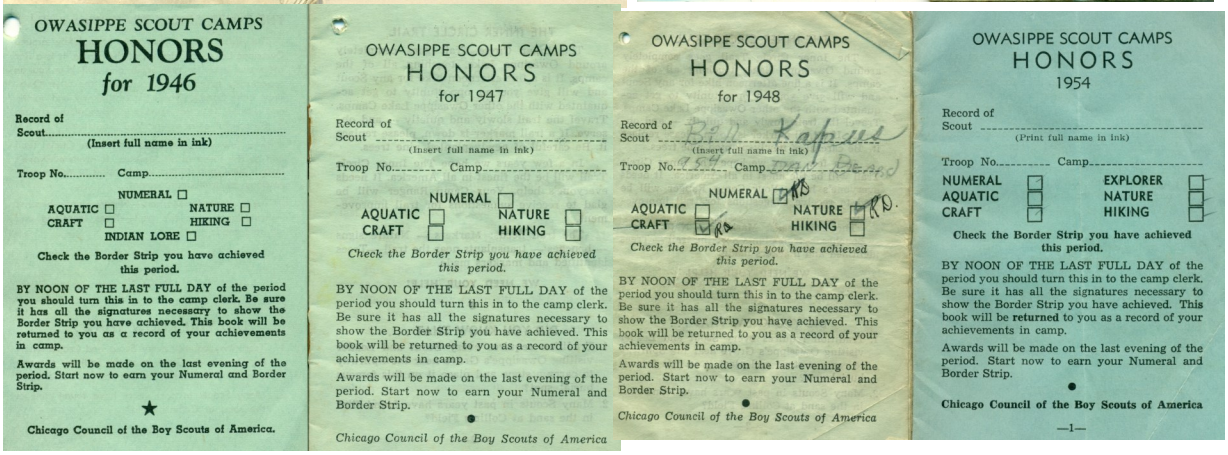

BOY SCOUTS
OF AMERICA
Every Boy
in Camp
WOODS · WATERS · TRAILS ·
HEALTH AND SAFETY
Wm. S. Gillespie, 638 Federal Street, Chicago
COME TO
Owassipe Scout Camps
Summer Camps of the Chicago Council, Boy Scouts of America
PERIODS
July 7th to July 19th
July 21st to Aug. 2nd
Aug. 4th to Aug. 16th
Aug. 18th to Aug. 30th
Register Early!
RATES FOR ONE PERIOD
$13.00 with troop
$14.00 as individual
Transportation $3.50
Ask your Scoutmaster for further rates and information

Owasippe Guide Books

In a camp as large as Owasippe, a guide book was helpful to familiarize campers and leaders with rules and to explain the opportunities available at camp. Every camper received a booklet and they provide historic researchers a valuable insight into camp operations.


THE CAMPER'S MANUAL
Issued to Scouts registered for
CAMP OWASIPPE
Chicago Council Boy Scouts of America
1918
The CAMPER'S MANUAL
Issued to Scouts registered for
CAMP OWASIPPE
CHICAGO COUNCIL, BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA
1919
THE CAMPERS' MANUAL
Issued to Scouts registered for
CAMP OWASIPPE
CHICAGO COUNCIL
BOY SCOUTS of AMERICA
1920
1924
The Owasippe Honors
Achieved by
Scout
Troop No.
Camp
By Friday noon of the last week of the period this record should be turned in to the Clerk bearing authorized signatures certifying to Scout's achievements.
Award will be made at the Court of Honor at the campfire on Friday evening.


The Owasippe Honors
1938
ACHIEVED BY
Scout
(Insert name in ink)
Troop No.
Camp
By noon of the last Friday of the period you should turn this in to the camp clerk. Be sure it has all the signatures necessary to show the Honor you have achieved.
Awards will be made at the Ceremonial Campfire on the last evening of the period. Start now to earn your Numeral and "O"!
OWASIPPE SCOUT CAMPS
Chicago Council of the Boy Scouts of Americ
CAMP HONORS
of 1939
ACHIEVED BY
Scout
(Insert full name in ink)
Troop No.
Camp
BY NOON OF THE LAST FRIDAY of the period you should turn this in to the camp clerk. Be sure it has all the signatures necessary to show the Honor you have achieved.
Awards will be made at the Ceremonial Campfire on the last evening of the period. Start now to earn your Numeral and "O"!
OWASIPPE SCOUT CAMPS
Chicago Council of the Boy Scouts of America
OWASIPPE SCOUT CAMPS
HONORS
for 1941
Scout ROBERT SCHNELL
Troop No. 17 Camp STUART
AQUATIC NATURE
CRAFT HIKING
INDIAN LORE
Check the department, in which you have achieved honor, this period.
BY 9:00 P.M. OF THE LAST THURSDAY of the period you should turn this in to the camp clerk. Be sure it has all the signatures necessary to show the Honor you have achieved. This book will be returned to you as a record of your achievements in camp.
Awards will be made at the Ceremonial Campfire on the last evening of the period. Start now to earn your Numeral and "O"!
Chicago Council of the Boy Scouts of A
OWASIPPE SCOUT CAMPS
HONORS
for 1942
Scout DONALD BAHN
Troop No. 17 Camp STUART
NUMERAL
AQUATIC NATURE
CRAFT HIKING
INDIAN LORE
Check the Border Strip you have achieved this period.
BY 3:00 P.M. OF THE LAST FULL DAY of the period you should turn this in to the camp clerk. Be sure it has all the signatures necessary to show the Border Strip you have achieved. This book will be returned to you as a record of your achievements in camp.
Awards will be made at the Ceremonial Campfire on the last evening of the period. Start now to earn your Numeral and Border Strip.
Chicago Council of the Boy Scouts of America.


OWASIPPE SCOUT CAMPS
HONORS
for 1946
Record of
Scout
(Insert full name in ink)
Troop No. Camp
NUMERAL
AQUATIC NATURE
CRAFT HIKING
INDIAN LORE
Check the Border Strip you have achieved this period.
BY NOON OF THE LAST FULL DAY of the period you should turn this in to the camp clerk. Be sure it has all the signatures necessary to show the Border Strip you have achieved. This book will be returned to you as a record of your achievements in camp.
Awards will be made on the last evening of the period. Start now to earn your Numeral and Border Strip.
Chicago Council of the Boy Scouts of America.
OWASIPPE SCOUT CAMPS
HONORS
for 1947
Record of
Scout
(Insert full name in ink)
Troop No. Camp
NUMERAL
AQUATIC NATURE
CRAFT HIKING
Check the Border Strip you have achieved this period.
BY NOON OF THE LAST FULL DAY of the period you should turn this in to the camp clerk. Be sure it has all the signatures necessary to show the Border Strip you have achieved. This book will be returned to you as a record of your achievements in camp.
Awards will be made on the last evening of the period. Start now to earn your Numeral and Border Strip.
Chicago Council of the Boy Scouts of America
OWASIPPE SCOUT CAMPS
HONORS
for 1948
Record of
Scout Bill Kapus
(Insert full name in ink)
Troop No. Camp
NUMERAL
AQUATIC NATURE
CRAFT HIKING
Check the Border Strip you have achieved this period.
BY NOON OF THE LAST FULL DAY of the period you should turn this in to the camp clerk. Be sure it has all the signatures necessary to show the Border Strip you have achieved. This book will be returned to you as a record of your achievements in camp.
Awards will be made on the last evening of the period. Start now to earn your Numeral and Border Strip.
Chicago Council of the Boy Scouts of America
OWASIPPE SCOUT CAMPS
HONORS
1954
Record of
Scout
(Print full name in ink)
Troop No. Camp
NUMERAL EXPLORER
AQUATIC NATURE
CRAFT HIKING
Check the Border Strip you have achieved this period.
BY NOON OF THE LAST FULL DAY of the period you should turn this in to the camp clerk. Be sure it has all the signatures necessary to show the Border Strip you have achieved. This book will be returned to you as a record of your achievements in camp.
Awards will be made on the last evening of the period. Start now to earn your Numeral and Border Strip.
Chicago Council of the Boy Scouts of America
—1—

Camp manuals were usually published yearly. Information on activities, programs, operations and honor programs are all in these little books. The challenge is to locate a library of them for research and then read and interpret the material. Historical information sometimes changes over the years. When I've run into this, I return to the information in my earliest source. They may have got something wrong in the 1939 booklet about something that happened in 1919, but it's probably correct in the 1920 booklet. There are booklets that contradict each other. I don't believe much effort was taken to getting history correct in the camper's manuals, and it's taken quite a bit of research to figure out what's right or wrong.

1930

Songs--

SCOUTS WILL SING AT OLD OWASIPPE

THE OWASIPPE SONG

Tune:—"Alma Mater"—Cornell

All the wealth of earth and heaven
Bless thy woods and dales,
Over all thy lakes and forest
Happy youth prevails.
So may Scouting's bond of friendship
Seal our loyalty
To the camp so dear to memory
Hail, Owasippe!

CAMP DAN BEARD SONG

Tune: "Same as Owasippe Song"

High above Lake Crystal's waters,
In among the trees,
Floats the banner of Camp Dan Beard,
Waving in the breeze.

Chorus—
Hail to Dan Beard!
Hail to Dan Beard!
With its Scouts so true,
With the spirit of good Scouting,
Hail Dan Beard to you.

DEAR OLD BEL-NAP

Tune: "Sweet Chewalka land of sleepy wa

Dear old Bel-nap
By the sleepy water
Take this weary Scouter
Over to you
Dear old Bel-nap
How I love to be here
How I love to see here
Friends old and new
Night shades calling
Moon beams falling o'er the water
Tomtom's beating bringing golden memories
Dear old Bel-nap
By the sleepy water
Take this weary Scouter
Over to you.

CAMP JAMES E. WEST SONG

Tune: "Notre Dame Victory March"

Cheer, cheer for Camp James E. West,
Shout out the name of the camp you love best,
Let the echoes ring on high,
While we your praise sing to the skies;

Here's to your Scouts who are true,
Here's to the men who are loyal to you,
No other camp so dear to us,
We pledge you our loyalty,
CAMP WEST!

CAMP CHECAUGAU SONG

Oh we're the scouts of Checaugau
You hear so much about;
The people stop and stare at us
Whenever we go out;
We're noted for our wisdom
And the clever things we do,
Most everybody likes us,
And we hope you'll like us too.

As we go marching and the band begins to play
U rah! rah!
You can hear us shouting
The Boy Scout troops are here today.

CAMP BLACKHAWK SONG and CAMP McDONALD SONG

Tune: "Trek Cart Song"

Over hill, over dale, as we hit the camping trail,
And our buddies are hiking along.
In and out, hear us shout,
GEE! I'm glad that I'm a Scout!
As we're singing our own camping song.
Then it's hi-hi-he, Old Camp Mac (Camp Blackhawk) for me!
Shout out that name loud and strong, CAMP MAC! (Blackhawk)

The Owasippe Chant

SONS OF OWASIPPE

By Harold Mommsen Time 2/3

L-SCOUTS COME LISTEN TO MY TALE
S-HAIL OWASIPPE
L-LET IT RING FROM EVERY HILL AND DALE
S-HAPPY SCOUTS ARE WE
L-LEAVE YOUR CITIES FAR BEHIND
S-HAIL OWASIPE
L-ON THE TRAIL A WHOLE NEW LIFE YOU'LL FIND
S-SONS OF OWASIPPE

CHORUS

SING OUT LOUD AND CLEAR
WITH A HEART THAT'S BRAVE AND FEEE
LET US SING OUR JOYOUS CAREFREE SONG
SONS OF OWASIPPE

JOIN US IN THE FOREST GREEN
WHERE THE WIND BLOWS FREE AND THE AIR IS CLEAN
SEE OUR WATERS BLUE AND CLEAR
WE RETURN SO FAITHFULLY EACH YEAR

OUT WHERE PINES GROW STRAIGHT AND TALL
WHERE THE RIPPLING SINGING ATERS FALL
THERE YOU'LL FIND OUR HAPPY SCOUTS
ON THE ANCIENT, TIME-WORN INDIAN ROUTES

DOWNSTREAM FLASHES OUR CANOE
ON THE WATERS FLOWING SWIFT AND TRUE
WHITE AND PINBE AND MANISTEE
ALL THE STREAMS OF THE POTTAWATOMIE

PRAISE OUR GREAT AND MIGHT CHIEF
LET US SING HIS NAME AND FEEL NO GRIEF
ONCE HE RULED THIS WONDEROUS LAND
NOW THE SCOUTS HAVE JOINED HIS LOYAL BAND

Owasippe Songs

STUART CAMP SONG

HAIL STUART CAMPERS BRAVE AND FREE
LOYAL SONGS OF CHIEF OWASIPPE
WE WORK AND SING THE WHOLE DAY LONG
TO BUILD A FRIENDSHIP TRUE AND STONG

HAIL STUART

NO MATTER HOW FAR WE MAY ROAM
STUART WILL ALWAYS BE OUR HOME
AND WHEN OUR CAMPING DAYS HAVE
CEASE TO BE
WE'LL PRAISE OWASIPPE

CAMP WILDERNESS

TUNE-Smiles

THERE'S A CAMP WE'LL ALWAYS YEARN FOR
ON THE WATERS OF BIG BLUE
WHERE THE SCOUTS ARE STRONG & SELF RELIANT
WITH A HELPING HAND FOR ONE WHOSE NEW
WHERES A CAMP THAT HAS THAT SCOUTING SPIRIT
AND WHOSE LOYALTY IS EVER TRUE
OH! CAMP WILDERNESS IT'S YOU WE CHERISH
WE'RE SINCERE IN OUR LOVE FOR YOU

CAMP BLACKHAWK/McDONALD MARCHING SONG

TUNE-Artillery Song

OVER HILL OVER DALE AS WE HIT THE CAMPING TRAIL
AND OUR BUDDIES ARE HIKING ALONG
IN AND OUT HEAR THEM SHOUT, GEE:
I'M GLAD THAT I'M A SCOUT
AS WE'RE SINGING THAT OLD CAMP SONG
THAT IT'S HI-HI-HI-HE,
CAMP BLACKHAWK *OR* MACDONALD FOR ME
SHOUT OUT THAT NAME LOUD AND STRONG
CAMP BLACKHAWK OR CAMP MACK
WHERE'ER YOU GO, YOU WILL ALWAYS KNOW
THAT A TRUE SCOUT WILL ALWAYS COME BACK
TO *CAMP BLACKHAWK OR TO MCDONALD*
YES A TRUE SCOUT WILL ALWAYS COME BACK

FAMOUS CRYSTAL LAKE

FAMOUS CRYSTAL LAKE SO CLEAR
CHICAGO SCOUTS REVERE
FROM DAYS OF OLD
THEIR DEAR OLD OWASIPPE
EACH YEAR TRAINED SCOUTS SHOULD BE
GOOD CAMPER ALL
O'ER THE LAND THAT SPREAD THEIR FAME
TILL THE CAMP BECAME SO LARGE
IT SPLIT IN THREE
THEN SOUTH SHORE AND CALUMET
FORMED THE NEW CAMP JAMES E WEST

NOW OUR OWN CAMP JAMES E WEST
SURLEY IS THE BEST
IN ALL THE LAND
HERE WE HAVE OUR WOODCRAFT GAMES
AND LEARN OF TREES, THEIR NAME
AND OTHER LORE
WHETHER IN OUR WORK OR PLAY
GREAT FUN WE HAVE EACH DAY
IN ALL WE DO
WHILE WE STRIVE TO WORTHY BE
OF THE NAME OF OUR GREAT CHIEF

CAMP WILDERNESS SONG

TUNE-A Capital Ship

WE'RE A SCOUTING TROOP THAT'S FLOWN THE COOP
FOR A ROLLICKING, ROVING TRAMP;
WE'RE A BUNCH OF BOYS WHO KNOW THE JOYS
OF MAKING A FOREST CAMP.
WE KNOW THE TRAIL WHEN STARS ARE PALE
OR BY THE LIGHT OF DAY,
AND OUR HAVERSACKS ARE ON OUR BACKS,
SO LETS BE ON OUR WAY.

CHORUS
YO HO: YO HO: YO HO; TO WILDERNESS WE'LL GO
WITH JOYOUS HEARS EACH SCOUT WILL START
AND THIS WILL BE OUR SONG:
WE'RE OFF ON THE MORNING BREEZE
TO SEE THE LAKES AND TREES
THERE'S ROOM FOR MORE IN OUR JOLLY CORP,
SO WON'T YOU COME ALONG

WE KNOW THE PLACE WHERE BROOK TROUT RACE
AND THE HAUNTS OF THE BEAVER TOO
AND THE SECRET WHERE NUTS ARE FOUND
WE'LL SHOW THE SPOT TO YOU
YOU'LL LEARN TO MAKE A FIRE AND BAKE
A MEAL TO FILL YOUR TUM
AND WE'LL MAKE YOU A SCOUT BEYOND A DOUBT
SO PICK UP YOUR FEET AND COME

1960 Camp Capital Campaign & laying the foundation for the modern Owasippe

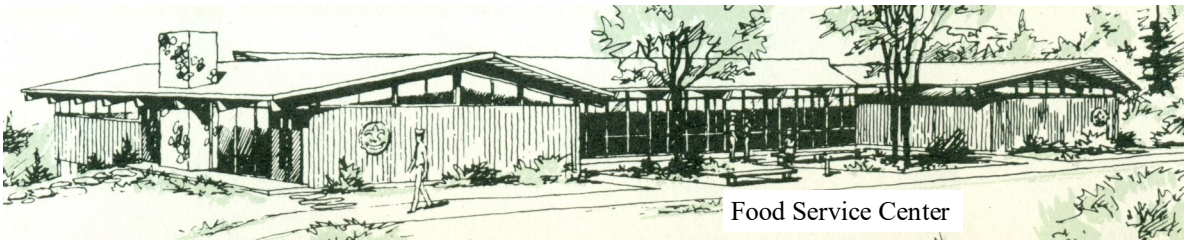
The foundation for the modern Owasippe was laid in 1959 and 1960 with a Camp Capital Campaign. The 1960 campaign was skillfully organized; influential Chicago businessmen and community leaders were on the committee or working as solicitors. A beautifully prepared brochure was developed and it was straight to the point; the council needed money. Scouting in Chicago was growing. Chicago was one of the largest Councils and it was claimed that membership had increased fifty seven percent over the past ten years. The booklet stated that the council had been unable to make improvements at Owasippe since 1933 or at the near-in camps since 1939. The near-in camps, especially Kiwanis, had been pressed into service and were overflowing. The plan was to reinvent Owasippe, with new facilities and to develop nearby camps at Yorkville and Crete.

Council Executive Hal Rush came to Chicago in 1958 from a position as Council Executive in Washington DC and had previously been an Administrative Assistant to the Chief Scout Executive and even earlier, Assistant Executive in Los Angeles and St. Louis. But something seemed to go wrong (my research has not revealed what) and although Rush kicked off the campaign in 1959, he was gone from Scouting by the end of 1960. A new Executive, Alden Barber, came in the spring of 1961 to finalize the efforts and oversee most of the improvements. The name was later changed to the Camp Development Program; the solicitation campaign had wrapped up and funds were beginning to be spent. In 1962, sixty aluminum row boats and ten canoes were added to the Owasippe fleet. Work was begun on a new dam and lake development in the Wolverine area and a parking lot was installed at Camp Crete.

1948 Chicago professional staff

In my research, I have repeatedly read statements about how little money was put into Owasippe after the early 1930's and what a financial drain the camp was to the Chicago Council. In the 1960 solicitation brochure it is stated that the camps at Owasippe are not only run down and dilapidated, **but that the camps were obsolete**. Renovations were not needed, new camps were the answer. I have questioned why this was allowed to happen. The council planned to double membership in 1948, and yet there was no attempt to raise funds for Owasippe until 1960. There is no way to know what the motivation of council leaders was, or why steps to insure Owasippe's viability were-n't taken earlier. But the photo (above) provides a clue. In 1948, the council had an operating staff of 60+ employees. The council had grown from five districts to twenty four. Each with a full time Executive and secretary, plus managers and executives. The operating costs were huge; salaries, expenses, insurance and benefits plus office space and equipment. After council operating expenses, there just wasn't any money left for camp improvements.

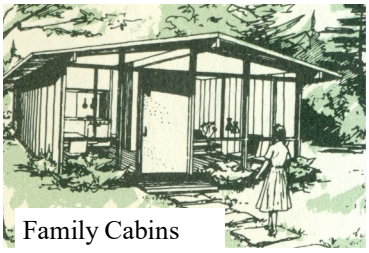
The plan above and the artist representations below are from the 1960 Camp Capital Campaign brochure. Some designs turned out differently than proposed, but many of the facilities were built in the 1960's.



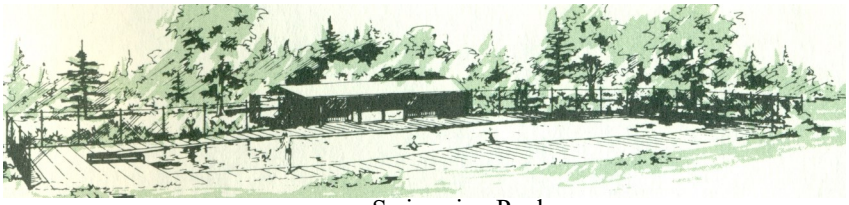
Food Service Center

Health Lodge

Administration Center



Family Cabins



Swimming Pool

"The New Plan" as outlined in the 1960 Camp Capital Campaign booklet

"The new camps will replace the present worn-out and obsolete camps at Owasippe. Each section camp will have twelve troop campsites, increasing the total summer camp capacity initially from 4,000 to 6,000. Four of the six new section camps will have double-purpose swimming pools designed to permit total use by two troops at the same time while preserving unit identity."

"The basic philosophy of the plan emphasizes troop and patrol operations. The individual identity of each troop and patrol is preserved with secluded campsites of ample space with natural buffer areas."

The "new plan" sounds similar to the plan that E. U. Goodman brought to the Chicago Council in 1927. The Council had been trying for thirty two years to break the allure of the full service camps. The new plan would offer troop camping in better accommodations. It's not clear if accommodations were the problem. The old camps were badly deteriorated; they had only necessary repairs and little maintenance since 1933. Ultimately, the question was, did Chicago Scouters want troop camping and were most of the troops ready for it?

The new Owasippe was being designed for troops like 380. (above) Seven adult leaders, six older boys and nineteen scouts. A troop like this could take advantage of the individual troop campsite. The adult leaders and older boys could instruct and pass tests, and the troop could fill its half of the swimming pool. Unfortunately, this type of troop would be in the minority of troops attending Owasippe. The new method was almost a return to the pre-1913 days when strong troops provided good experiences and weaker troops did not. This problem was recognized in 1913, and that was the reason the council developed full service camps.

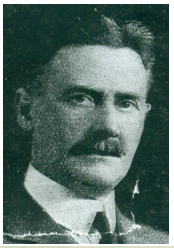
Authors Note

As I say above, Troop 380 seems like a perfect candidate for a troop camp, like Wilderness or Pioneer Yet, this obviously strong-well organized troop camped at Blackhawk (a full service camp). I do not know why, but I'd speculate that Blackhawk was their camp. The Scoutmaster was a veteran Owasippe camper and I'll bet, camped at Blackhawk as a boy. It was troop tradition to return to "their camp," Blackhawk.

Everything we do in scouting is to strengthen the troop, but what do you do with weak troops or troops with inadequate camp leadership? Troop camping is the modern method, but I can't help but wonder if there isn't a place in modern scouting for a full service Boy Scout camp?

Chicago Council Scout Executives 1911-1961 & Camping Chairmen 1927-1961

I have avoided emphasizing names of individuals. I do however, feel it appropriate to cover the Council Scout Executives. They had immense influence over Owasippe. In the early years, the Council Executive was involved with every aspect of camp; they had been Scoutmasters and Camp Directors, and they worked actively in the administration of Owasippe. After 1928 the management of camp was assigned to a Program/Camping Director. When the role of the District Executives was reduced, good leadership was obtained, but the intimate relationship between the Council & District Executives to camp was lost. In the early days, if something was needed at Camp West, the South Shore District Executive who directed Camp West was aware of the need. He would see that supplies or labor were secured. After the District Executives were less involved and with the Council Executive just making an occasional week-end visit, things that were needed were reported to a committee. The personal involvement of "top management," was lost and Owasippe suffered.



1910-12/1914 D. W. Pollard

Pollard became the Executive Secretary of the newly incorporated Chicago Council in 1910. He had been a YMCA professional before entering scouting. He left Chicago for the Executive position in the newly formed Los Angeles Council in California.

1915-1918 Louis L. McDonald

McDonald had been a Scoutmaster in 1910 and entered professional scouting in 1911. He became the Assistant Executive in Chicago in 1913, and was Camp Director at Owasippe in 1913 and '14 becoming Council Executive in 1915. He left Chicago in 1918 to accept the newly created position of National Director of Camping. He served until 1937 and was Camp Chief of the Schiff Scout Reservation until retirement in 1947.

1919-1920 Walter E. Dorland & Joseph A. Wauchope

Little is known about Dorland & Wauchope. It appears that they each served only a year.

They were not promoted to Chicago from another council and it is unknown if they had executive BSA experience prior to Chicago.

1/1921-12/1921 Dr. Huber W. Hurt

Hurt came to Chicago from a position on the BSA National Staff. He had a PhD and was a favorite of James E. West but for unknown reasons he was another one year Council Executive. Hurt returned to the National Council after Chicago and had a distinguished career, authoring or contributing to several handbooks and spearheading the Cub Division.

Editors Note: It seems odd that the council should have three Executives in three years. In the early years the Executive Board ran the council. The position of Council Executive was in transition, years earlier they had been Council Secretaries. The idea that a new professional Executive could come to Chicago and implement new national programs to a active council board may have been difficult. I can envision problems when a young man comes to town to instruct successful (older) businessmen on how things should be done.

1922-2/1927 George B. Stephenson

During Stephenson's administration, Owasippe grew from two camps to five. He had a greater impact on Owasippe than any other Council Executive, but little is know about him. His leaving in February, 1927 seems to have been abrupt. Walter Kiplinger, the Region 7 Executive and Arthur Schuck, National Director of Operations ran the council for the period before E. U. Goodman came as the new Executive. The Region Executives' presence doesn't seem unusual, (Kiplinger was a Chicago native) but the National Director of Operations in Chicago seems odd. It's unknown why Schuck was in the city, some have suggested to look over the Council Executive job, but if that was the case, he declined.

4/1927-1930 E. U. Goodman-Council Executive

Because Goodman's tenure had such a profound impact on Chicago scouting, I have developed several pages explaining how a Council Executive can affect the operation of a council and camp. (see following pages)

In the earliest years councils were run by the Executive Board. The title for the earliest scouting professionals was Executive **Secretary**. The titles tell the story, a secretary carries out the wishes of others. The Council **Executive** directs the council. This type of change was occurring on the national scene. Early pioneers like Seaton and other program men were eased off the National Executive Board for more compliant board members and James E. West was firmly in command of all aspects of Boy Scouting. In Chicago, men like A. Stamford White, R. Douglas Stuart, Howard F. Gillette, etc had been on the Chicago Executive Board since 1910. They had been running and funding the Chicago Council. These men were successful, important men in the city. (President of the Chicago Board of Trade, President of the Quaker Oaks Co, a prominent banker). My understanding of human nature leads me to believe that men like this might not be the type to kowtow to some newly appointed Scout Executive. When E. U. Goodman came to Chicago, he was different. He had made a name for himself in Philadelphia and initially he must have commanded the respect of the Chicago pioneers. Goodman was the first of the modern Scout Executives in Chicago.

1931-8/1937 Perry A. Lint

Lint came to Chicago having been the Region 4 Executive after previously serving as Council Executive in Columbus, Ohio. It was under his guidance that the Chicago Council survived the Depression and the difficult decisions regarding closing camps at Owasippe were made. It was Lint who challenged the Order of the Arrow to be active in camp promotion. Lint integrated the Order of the Arrow by insisting that the Douglas Division participate in this council wide program. After Chicago Lint became the Executive for the Greater NYC Scouting Foundation and later a Deputy Chief Scout Executive.

9/1937-2/1939 Ralph Nodine

Nodine was a Chicago volunteer who became a Commissioner in 1915. In 1920 he became the Scout Executive in Aurora, Illinois (1920-1925). In 1926 he became the Executive in Milwaukee and was later Region 1 Executive. In April 1937 he became the Executive of Region 7. Nodine became the Chicago Executive on 9/1937 and died in office in 1939.

2/1939-1945 W. Arthur McKinney

McKinney came to Chicago with strong multi-district experience having been the Council Executive in Rochester, New York for twenty two years. Under McKinney's leadership the council survived the shortages and manpower difficulties of WW II. McKinney retired in 1945.

1946-1958 Lee (Leland) D. Cornell

Cornell came to Chicago from the Council Executive position in Minneapolis, Minnesota. He began his career in Winona, Minnesota and was Scout Ex. in Rochester, Minnesota He served as a Deputy Region Ex. in both Region 10 & Region 2. It was under Cornell's leadership that the six districts were expanded to twenty four (1948) Cornell had the longest tenure as Chicago Council Executive. He retired in 1958.

10/1958-1960 Hal Rush

Rush came to Chicago from the Council Executive position in Washington D.C.. He had previously been an Administrative Assistant to the Chief Scout Executive. (1950) He started his professional career in Minneapolis in 1927. He had been the Council Executive in Albert Lea, Minnesota. He served as Assistant in St Louis before entering the service during WW II and was Assistant Executive in Los Angeles from 1946 to 1950. During his tenure in Chicago, a major capital campaign was under taken to fund the improvements at Owasippe during the 1960's.

3/1961-1966 Alden Barber

Barber was an Eagle Scout and had been Council Executive in Sacramento, California. He had previously been Council Executive in Marysville, California, Asst. Exec. in Crescent Bay Council. He started his professional career in Santa Monica, California. Barber continued the capital campaign started by Rush and supervised improvements at Owasippe. He left Chicago to become the Chief Scout Executive. When Barber was Chief Scout, the BSA came under scrutiny for creative accounting regarding membership. As Chief Scout, Barber instituted changes in programs that reflected a more urban type of scouting, themes that he had developed in Chicago. These programs along with the accounting discrepancies put a blemish on his tenure as Chief Scout, but he was a popular Executive in Chicago.

Camping/Program Directors

Because the Camping/Program Director was the administrator of Owasippe I have identified them.

1928 Hanson Haun The position was developed in 1928. Haun came to Chicago from St. Louis hired by Goodman to institute troop camping at Owasippe. During 1928 Owasippe had a loss of revenue exceeding any other year in history. Chicago troops did not embrace troop camping.

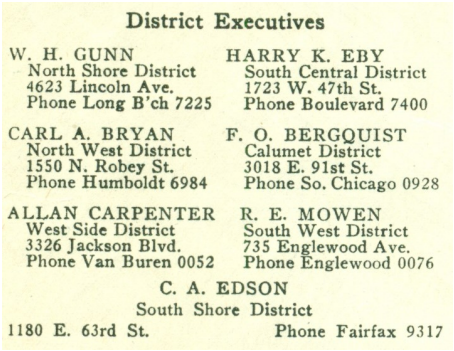
1929-1938 Alfred C. Nichols from Philadelphia. Nichols was an Eagle Scout. He had been Camp Director at Treasure Island (1924-1927). He was a pioneer in the OA having been Unami Chief (1924) and Grand Lodge Chief (1925). He was brought to Chicago by Goodman to help institute more troop camping and get camp expenses under control. Nichols was very active in the Owasipe Lodge and while serving as Chicago Camping Director also held offices in the Grand Lodge. He served through Goodman's and Lint's administration. Just months into the Nodine administration he became Assistant Council Executive in NYC, with major responsibilities for camping.

1938-1946 Victor Alm was a Chicago Eagle Scout who started his professional career in Chicago. He served as an Assistant under Nichols, sometimes with the title Director of Program. Perz replaced Alm as Camping Director, but Alm remained on the council staff serving as a District Executive and Director of Camp Kiwanis.

E. U. Goodman-Chicago Scout Executive Jan 1927—Dec. 31, 1930

Mr. Goodman would become the seventh Chicago Council Executive. I have chosen to cover Goodman because he made significant changes during his administration. Pollard helped organize the council in the earliest days. McDonald helped the council grow and oversaw the growth of Owasippe. Stephenson ran the council efficiently from 1922 through 1926 and expanded Owasippe to include the Big Blue Lake camps. Goodman arrived in Chicago in the "golden years." Membership, manpower and money were on a steady increase; Camp Owasippe was completed and the six districts were strong and active. Goodman inherited a capable staff of scouting professionals although most would leave for positions elsewhere within the year. Longtime Council President R. Douglas Stuart assured continuity on the Executive Board although most members would be replaced by 1930. Goodman came to Chicago with definite ideas about how a Boy Scout Council and it's camp should be run, and it appears that he was not interested in what had gone on previously.

In 1927, Goodman seemed like the ideal candidate to administer the growing Chicago Council. He had multi-district administration experience when few other scouting professionals did, and he had been successful in Philadelphia. Goodman's administration in Philadelphia had been established slowly, starting as Scoutmaster, Camp Director and then Council Executive. He was respected by Philadelphia scouters from his days as Chief Scoutmaster of Troop 1, 1910-1915. He handpicked the Philadelphia scouting professionals and one of his Assistant Scoutmasters from Troop 1 in 1913, Horace Kern, followed him as Council Executive in Philadelphia. The administration of the Philadelphia Council was concentrated in the Council Executive and his staff with headquarters "downtown." This was the only form of administration Philadelphia scouters had ever known but Chicago was organized differently.



District Executives

W. H. GUNN
North Shore District
4623 Lincoln Ave.
Phone Long B'ch 7225

HARRY K. EBY
South Central District
1723 W. 47th St.
Phone Boulevard 7400

CARL A. BRYAN
North West District
1550 N. Robey St.
Phone Humboldt 6984

F. O. BERGQUIST
Calumet District
3018 E. 91st St.
Phone So. Chicago 0928

ALLAN CARPENTER
West Side District
3326 Jackson Blvd.
Phone Van Buren 0052

R. E. MOWEN
South West District
735 Englewood Ave.
Phone Englewood 0076

C. A. EDSON
South Shore District
1180 E. 63rd St.
Phone Fairfax 9317

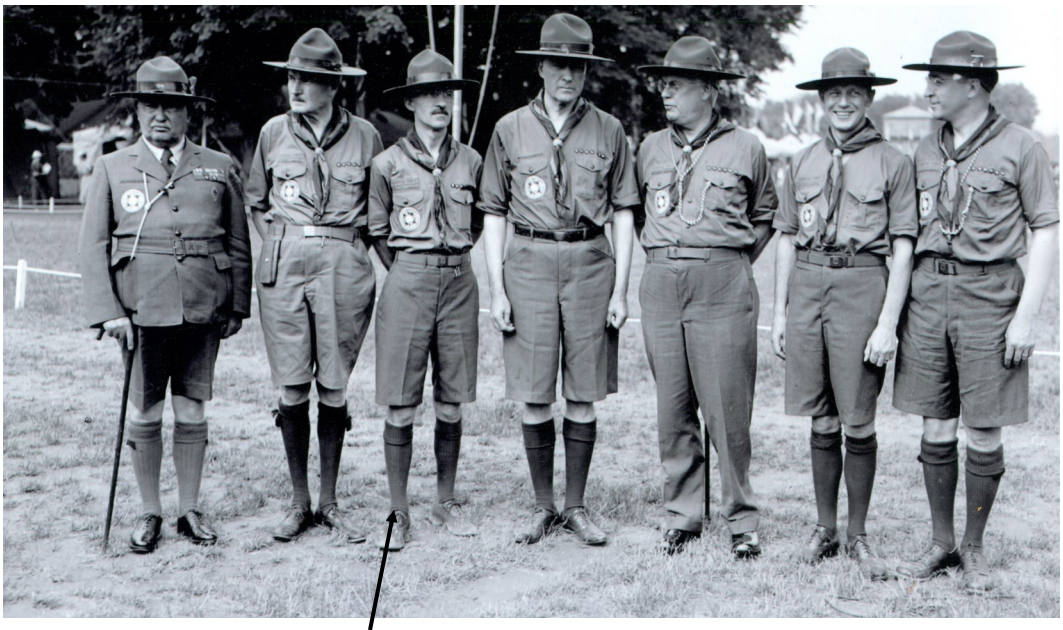
Eliminating district control The Chicago Council had operated with a decentralized form of administration since 1913. The districts were nearly autonomous and each district had a headquarters office within the district boundaries. Within months of Goodman's arrival the neighborhood district offices were closed. Scouting professionals who had been "running their own shows" would have to report to and travel downtown for everything. Edson, Gunn and Mowen left for positions elsewhere in 1927. Carl Bryan gave up the North West District for a staff position downtown but would leave Chicago in 1928. District volunteers were outraged. Things appeared to be great in 1927 and while there may have been financial savings in closing the district offices, the loss of district offices and experienced professionals was a catastrophe. The obvious reason for closing the district offices was to secure more central administration of scouting in Chicago, the way it was in Philadelphia. Closing the district offices was the first step in dismantling the power of the districts. This was a change that many Chicago scouters strongly opposed, and Goodman was responsible. Prior to 1927 each edition of Scoutcraft, the monthly Council newspaper, had district news. After 1927, information in Scoutcraft regarding district events and plans were notably absent, and by 1928 district news was virtually eliminated from council publications. The names of the individual District Executives had been listed on the masthead of council publications since 1913. They were listed as "members of the Executive Staff." In 1928, the names of the District Executives were no longer listed in council publications. Reviewing Philadelphia literature, the Philadelphia district men were never acknowledged as part of the Council Executive Staff, but they had been in Chicago since 1913.

The Lord of the Manor Goodman took his first tour of Owasippe in the early spring and wrote of his experiences in the June 1927 edition of Scoutcraft (the Council monthly paper). He was
complimentary of the camp and it's traditions, but in the fifth paragraph he stated "*And so I saw Owasippe for the first time, and I felt like* ***the lord of the manor surveying his new domain***".
This comment from Goodman's article resounded through the council. The new Executive has arrived and he was the "**lord of the manor.**" He had only been in the city for six months, but as change after change was forced upon Chicago scouting, the Lord of the Manor title stuck to Goodman. Goodman had a couple of other factors that worked against him in Chicago. His full name was Elmer Urner Goodman. In the early years, he had dropped Elmer and used E. Urner Goodman. When he came to Chicago, he usually used only initials and his last name, E.U. Goodman. This caused all to refer to him as Mr. Goodman. Perhaps it is appropriate with youth, as a sign of respect. But people in Chicago used first names. The Mayor was Jim Thompson, the Governor was Louis Emmerson, even Chicago's most famous citizen was known by his first name, Al Capone. There is something else about Goodman that is difficult to quantify but seems to have had an impact on his standing with individuals in the council. Goodman was a man of very slight build. He was 5'5" tall and never weighed over 135 pounds. He had been ill during his years in Chicago and was occasionally only 120 pounds. In meetings Goodman would be the smallest man in the room. Scouting professionals were discouraged from wearing facial hair, but Goodman wore a mustache, perhaps to help counter his boyish appearance. Goodman moved his family to the exclusive suburb

A new way of camping at Owasippe The Philadelphia way of summer camping was the modern Patrol Method with the unit leader in camp with his boys. Philadelphia scouts camped by troops at Treasure Island. They slept in troop tents, usually on the ground, and Treasure Island didn't have a dining hall until 1926. A high percentage of Chicago Scouts came to camp without home unit leadership and experienced summer camp in provisional units, often comprised of boys from their troops but without their Scoutmasters. Programs were provided by trained camp staff. Owasippe campers slept in comfortable tents with floors and spring beds. Meals were served in a splendid dining hall with food prepared by restaurant quality chefs. Two weeks at Treasure Island in 1926 cost $7.50, two weeks at Owasippe cost $15 (including transportation). Treasure Island operated at a profit to the Philadelphia Council, while Owasippe was usually a break-even or a small loss to the Chicago Council. In 1926, Philadelphia had 2883 boy weeks at camp while Owasippe had 5930. Goodman knew how to operate camps and he wanted "more" from Owasippe. Hanson Haun from St Louis was hired as Activity Director (in charge of camping) by Goodman in 1928, and his mission was to get more troop camping (with unit leadership) at Owasippe and increase camp revenues. The 1928 camping season had a catastrophic lost of $11,000. Haun was replaced by Al Nichols who had worked for Goodman in Philadelphia, but even with his extensive background, Nichols had limited success with troop camping at Owasippe. Troops and districts had developed traditions that were not so easily changed. Writing in 1936 Nichols said this about promoting troop camping at Owasippe. "*In addition to other changes, Mr. Goodman endeavored to change the Owasippe system over to troop-centered camping. A small start was made in 1928, but lacking adequate trained leadership in this method of camp operation the experience was largely unsatisfactory. Spurred on by the promise of troop camping, 1928 saw the attendance at Owasippe jump forward sharply, yet insomuch as the experience given was not as promised, the reaction was decidedly unfavorable. This resulted in a change of leadership which brought in the present camp administration (Nichols).* Nichols effected some changes in 1929, cutting camp expenses and encouraging more unit leaders to come to camp with their troops, but the economic depression struck and the full service camps, became even more attractive as fewer unit leaders could get away to camp. The council tried all kinds of incentives to lure troops with leaders to camp, but the full service camps operated into the 1960's in much the same way they had in the 1920's.

Goodman & the Order of the Arrow at Camp Owasippe When Goodman came to Chicago, the OA had been operating for six years. Goodman wasn't venerated for his role in the founding the way he is today; he was no more celebrated than Carroll Edson or Walter Gunn. Yet, as the Council Executive, Goodman was the Supreme Chief of the Fire. There were several things he did not like about the way the OA was operating at Camp Owasippe. When in Philadelphia, he had been opposed to the very name Order of the Arrow, preferring instead the Wimachtendienk W.W. but Owasippe pioneered the name OA. Chicago arrow candidates had been taking their Ordeal ceremony on their knees and this was stopped. Owasippe lodge had a candidate selection process that required scouts to become Honor Campers prior to election and candidates were selected by the Camp Director and his staff. In a camp where a high percentage of campers were in provisional units without home unit leadership, this made sense. But, it was not the Philadelphia method and Goodman required the camps to change to unit elections. Consequently, arrow candidates were recommended by Scoutmasters and elected by individuals who in some cases had only known them for a week. These changes are different from the modern method where Scouts vote on selecting the candidates. To Chicago Scouters it was just another change instituted by Goodman.

The Consolidation of the Camp Lodges The various camps at Owasippe had their own separate lodges which were in effect actually district lodges. In 1929 a ruling came from somewhere that only councils could have lodges and the Camp Owasippe lodges were forced to consolidate into one single lodge. Chicago was the only council that had more than one lodge. Philadelphia had previously had two lodges (#1 & #8) but when Camp Biddle closed, lodge 8 disbanded. New York City lodges belonged to individual councils, and although the councils were affiliated, the dictate didn't apply to them. Only the Chicago camp lodges were affected. Chicago arrow-men were upset; they felt they were losing their individuality. Just two years earlier, the district offices had been closed and now the camps and closely related districts couldn't have their own lodges. Years earlier, Camp McDonald had dropped the OA because of national dictates, but that wasn't going to happen with Goodman as Council Executive. Men like Edson and Gunn who had been active in the Grand Lodge knew that the Council Executive could overrule the Grand Lodge, but Goodman did not. Chicago Scouters realized that Goodman was behind the change, and it was just another way to diminish the powers of the districts. In reality, the consolidations didn't change much regarding the OA in Chicago. The chapters grew in strength and the lodge generally had a small role in administering the chapters. Owasippe Lodge didn't even have a treasury; dues stayed in the chapters and the lodge was financed from the camping budget.



E.U. Goodman at the 1937 Jamboree.

The 1920's and '30's was an era when prominent Scout Executives operating a successful council had tenure for life. Men like Art Roberts in Cincinnati, Harold Williams in Providence, H. Roe Bartle in Kansas City and even Goodman's replacement in Philadelphia, Horace Kern, had the best job in the scouting profession. Incomes of successful Council Executives in larger councils surpassed that of other high level scouting professionals with the possible exception of the Chief Scout. After twelve years in Philadelphia, Goodman should have been a huge success in Chicago. Another man might have built an empire in Chicago, but the collapse of the financial markets in October 1929 made running a large multi district council like Chicago especially difficult. On December 31, 1930, Goodman left the corner office, Chief Executive position in Chicago for a desk outside James E. West's office in New York City.

In Chicago, Goodman created a more centralized form of council administration, he eliminated the camp/district Order of the Arrow lodges and sought to change the method of camping at Owasippe. Many of the members of the Council Executive Board, including the Chairman and four Vice Presidents were new between 1927 and 1930. It's not unusual for a new Executive to bring in men who approve of his handling of matters and to replace those that are resistant to change. The turn over on the Executive Board suggests that the way Executive Board members responded to Goodman was by resigning. Stuart remained the Council President through 1931, he had been the President since 1918. It is unknown if he was an active President or after fifteen years a figurehead.

In 1930, Goodman had what was arguably the best resume in scouting; he had been the Chief Executive in the two largest councils in the country. The depression took a heavy toll on scouting professionals. Men like Edson who had credentials (Engineering Degree & MBA) had options when councils closed. Others simply lost their jobs with no hope of finding similar work. Those who remained employed took pay cuts and the Executives of larger councils had to make difficult decisions over who would go or stay, and what would be opened or closed. James E. West had led scouting for over twenty years and Goodman was probably anticipating West's retirement with the difficulties of the depression. Yet, West had no intention of retiring, and lead the BSA for another twelve years. In the book James E. West by Rowan, it's stated that West stayed in the Chief Scout Executives position for several years too long. Goodman's timing may have seemed right in 1931 had West retired in 1935. James E West wasn't forced into retirement until September, 1942 and he was replaced by Dr. E. Fretwell. It was understood that the retired college professor would be an interim Chief Scout Executive. In 1948, Arthur Schuck, not Goodman, replaced Fretwell.
In 1942, Schuck's resume did not compare to Goodman's, having been an Executive only in a small council in the early years and then serving in a staff position (National Director of Operations for twenty years). But, when Fretwell became Chief Executive, Schuck went to Los Angeles as the Council Executive. With the addition of executive experience in a multi district council like Los Angeles from 1942 to 1948, Schuck demonstrated that he could run a large growing council as well as the National Office.

Goodman continued as National Director of Program until 1951. After retirement from the BSA, Goodman remained active in church work and the OA. In retirement, he was recognized with an honorary doctorate from Missouri Valley College. He used the title Dr. Goodman, much as James West had used his honorary doctorate from Kalamazoo College years earlier. In the 1950's, Goodman became immensely popular with members of the Order of the Arrow and was venerated as the founder (as in the single founder) of the Order of the Arrow.

The Districts of the Chicago Council 1913-1919

Scouting burst onto the scene in Chicago in 1910 and the Chicago Council was organized the same year. It was recognized that the potential would be huge and the new council was organized with a decentralized form of administration. As scouting grew, districts were created by any neighborhoods that could provide an organization and funding for a paid professional. This method of organization was unique. The New York City boroughs were organized into individual councils. Each with a separate camp and Executive. Philadelphia was divided into districts but administration was handled by a central office. In Philadelphia most events were sponsored by the council rather than districts. In 1913, there was no "right or wrong" way to organize the council of a large city. This became a problem for Chicago as scouting grew. The Philadelphia model emerged as the proper way and Chicago methods needed to change.

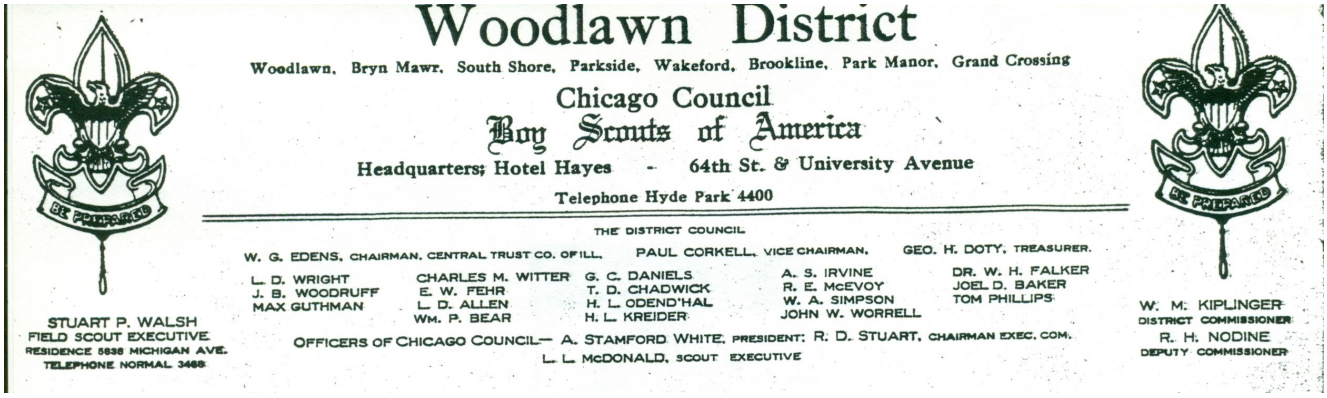
The organization and activities of the Chicago districts is a fascinating subject and as an author, I've had to contain myself otherwise this booklet about Owasippe could turn into a story of the districts. The history of the districts and Owasippe have been intertwined since the North Shore District established their first camp on Crystal Lake.

In 1914 the following districts are known

Chicago Avenue District-Chester B. Spies-Secretary
Chicago Avenue consolidated with North West in September 1916
Englewood District
Hyde Park District
North Shore District-J. P. Fitch-Secretary
North West District
Stock Yards District
West Side District-Chester B. Spies-Secretary
Woodlawn District
The District Secretary was a compensated position similar to today's District Executive

By 1917 each district employed a full time District Executive

North Shore District-Earl Rice
North West District-R. L. Hazlett
South West District-J. H. Griffin
Stock Yard District-C.C. Haradon
West Side District-Chester B. Spies with George Walker & Steven Majors-Commissioners
West Suburban District-John L. Anguish
Woodlawn District-Stuart P. Walsh with Walter Kiplinger & Ralph Nodine-Commissioners


Woodlawn District
Woodlawn, Bryn Mawr, South Shore, Parkside, Wakeford, Brookline, Park Manor, Grand Crossing
Chicago Council
Boy Scouts of America
Headquarters; Hotel Hayes - 64th St. & University Avenue
Telephone Hyde Park 4400
THE DISTRICT COUNCIL
W. G. EDENS, CHAIRMAN, CENTRAL TRUST CO. OF ILL. PAUL CORKELL, VICE CHAIRMAN, GEO. H. DOTY, TREASURER.
L. D. WRIGHT
J. B. WOODRUFF
MAX GUTHMAN
CHARLES M. WITTER
E. W. FEHR
L. D. ALLEN
WM. P. BEAR
G. C. DANIELS
T. D. CHADWICK
H. L. ODEND'HAL
H. L. KREIDER
A. S. IRVINE
R. E. McEVOY
W. A. SIMPSON
JOHN W. WORRELL
DR. W. H. FALKER
JOEL D. BAKER
TOM PHILLIPS
STUART P. WALSH
FIELD SCOUT EXECUTIVE
RESIDENCE 5636 MICHIGAN AVE.
TELEPHONE NORMAL 3468
OFFICERS OF CHICAGO COUNCIL— A. STAMFORD WHITE, PRESIDENT; R. D. STUART, CHAIRMAN EXEC. COM.
L. L. McDONALD, SCOUT EXECUTIVE
W. M. KIPLINGER
DISTRICT COMMISSIONER
R. H. NODINE
DEPUTY COMMISSIONER

The district letterhead above is from about 1917. The Woodlawn District was serving eight communities. The district employed a full time Executive (Stuart Walsh) and two part time professionals, the District Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner. In just a few years this strong active district combined with the Hyde Park District to form an ever larger district.

The Districts of the Chicago Council 1919-1932

1919-1920 Districts	1924-1932 Districts
Calumet District	Calumet District
Central Manufacturing District	North Shore District
Hyde Park-Woodlawn District	North West District
North Shore District	South Shore District
North West District	Stock Yards District
South Shore District	Stock Yards was sometimes called South Central District
South West District	South West District
Stock Yard District	West Side District
West Side District	The Douglas Division *

*for African American Scouts, it did not encompass a geographic area.

In the 1920's, sociologists from the University of Chicago divided the city into four sections with seventy-seven distinct neighborhoods. It appears that the Chicago Council was aware of the individual neighborhoods and their ethnic make-up. The most obvious example would be the Douglas Division/District with an African American professional, District Chairman and African American Commissioner. But with a city so ethnically divided consideration was given to the professional and Commissioner staff. This was an era when each neighborhood had their own churches and a Polish Roman Catholic church would not welcome an Irish or German priest, they wanted a Polish Priest. The Neighborhood Commissioner theme was developed in Chicago. A Jewish troop would welcome a visit by a Commissioner of Jewish heritage in much the same way that a German or Irish troop might welcome a Commissioner of German or Irish heritage. Some may think that I'm execrating, but it has been stated (in my opinion rightly so) that Chicago was the most segregated city in the USA. There were ethnic groups that did not intermingle and barely tolerated each other. The Chicago Council never condoned these prejudices' but they were recognized and deal with, especially in the early years.

The early Suburban Districts

Early Chicago Council literature contains information on activities of troops in Hammond, Indiana. Elmhurst, Evanston, Joliet, Western Springs and other Illinois communities outside the city of Chicago. A West Suburban District is listed in a 1917 Chicago Council publication. In the early years, troops outside of council jurisdiction (probably more than half of the troops nationwide) were sending correspondence to the national office. These included requests for information, advance forms, requisitions for badges, etc. The national office was overwhelmed with paperwork. In a 1915 article in Scouting Magazine, it is suggested that troops in proximity to larger councils affiliate themselves with the council. Chicago Councils could process advancement forms, provide badges and answer organizational questions. It is known that troops from outside the Chicago Council sent Scouts to Owasippe and probably the district camps in the earliest years.

As Scouting grew in suburban areas new councils were formed. Evanston had seven troops as early as early as 1914 and in 1916 a council was formed. West Suburban and North West Suburban Councils use the work Suburban in the council name. It is my belief that these councils had been affiliated with the Chicago Council as districts or parts of districts in the earliest years. A council in Cicero formed in 1922, but later became a Chicago District. In Thirteen Years of Scout Adventure published in 1923, Stuart Walsh indicates that his Joliet, Illinois troop was affiliated with Chicago in 1914.

The Districts of the Chicago Council 1933-1948

During the economic depression it became necessary for the council and districts to retrench. The seven districts from 1924-1932 were reduced to five. The Douglas Division remained, but was renamed the Douglas District. The new districts were:

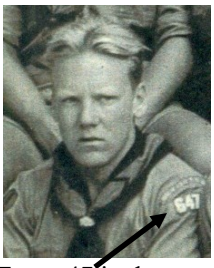
Douglas
North Shore
North West
South Shore (Calumet consolidated into South Shore)
South West (Stock Yards consolidated into South West)
West Side

The geographic location of the districts follows the descriptive district names with the exception of the North West District which was not in the northwest area of the city, but rather north of the West District. (see map on page 78) African American scouts remained in the Douglas District no matter where their sponsoring institution was located. Although, in this era most Douglas units were in the Bronzeville neighborhood, just south of downtown.

The 1933 district consolidations posed a number of problems. Calumet merged with South Shore, but they were both south side districts who used Camp West and Moqua Chapter. Stockyards and Southwest were also from the same vicinity with a Camp McDonald , Garrison Chapter tradition. West Side District and North West District remained intact but no longer had their own camps. The one hundred ninety three units in these districts still had their OA Chapters but now they would have to camp at what had previously been "other" districts camps. This may not sound like a hardship, but even with the economic depression of the 1930's it was a difficulty. (see page 36, Hard Times at Owasippe)

The new districts were large and as scouting in Chicago grew they became huge. In 1935 North Shore District had 116 troops, 12 Cub Packs and 7 Sea Scout Ships. West Side was the smallest district with 90 Troops, 11 Cub Packs and 4 Sea Scout Ships. Even the segregated Douglas District had 21 Troops and 8 Cub Packs. Any of the Chicago Districts, with the exception of Douglas, would rival the size of a council in Indianapolis, Des Moines, Grand Rapids, etc.

District identification 1933-1948


Troop 47 in the South West District

Douglas Units took the # of the geographic boundary their units were in.
North West District #**1-100 100-199**
West Side District #**200-300**
South West District **#400-499** & **#600-699**,
Stock Yard District had been #600 and consolidated into South West in 1933.
South Shore District # **500-599** & **#700-799**,
Calumet District had been #700 and consolidated into South Shore in 1933.
North Shore District **#800-899** & #**1800-#1899**

Cub Packs had a 3 before the district and unit numerals. Sea Scouts had a 5, Rover Crews an 8.

The numbering system became obsolete when the new districts were formed in 1948. They no longer identified specific districts, but they still identified specific geographic areas of the city.

District Neckerchiefs **North Shore**-Green, regulation official BSA neckerchief
Northwest-Maroon, " " " "
South West-Purple " " " "
South Shore-Blue " " " "
West Side-Red " " " "

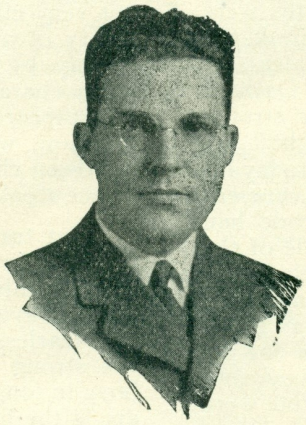
THE CAMP DIRECTORS AND THE STAFF

1934

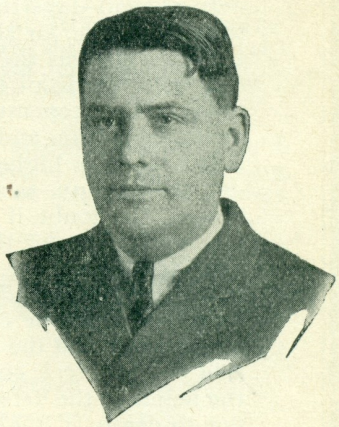
A Note to Parents

One hundred and forty men and young men take care of the needs and program for your boy as resident staff members. In addition the Scoutmasters and assistants of troops voluntarily give their time to help as members of the staff in charge of their troop. 230 different leaders helped in this capacity in 1930.

Victor L. (Roy) Alm
PROGRAM DIRECTOR



Alfred C. Nichols, Jr.
CHIEF CAMP DIRECTOR



Craig Atkinson
ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTOR

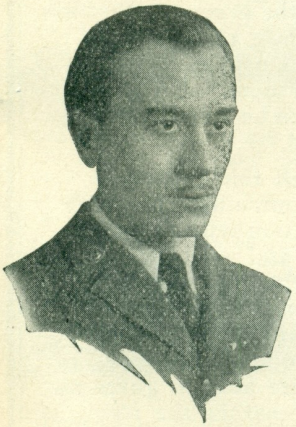
THE STAFF

From the applications of many hundreds of men and young men, the camp staff is selected.

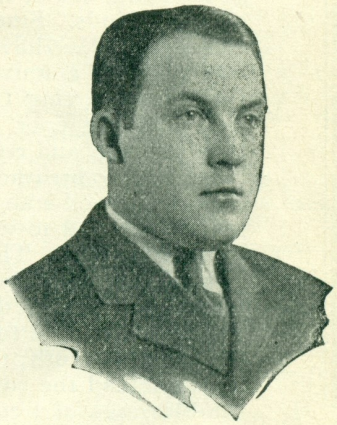
It is for the most part composed of men who are either college graduates or are now attending college, together with a group of older high school men of unusual talent and ability. Nearly all of these men have been with Owasippe from periods ranging from three to twenty years.

We believe that the most important factor in the success of camp is the selection of the staff.

We are proud of our Owasippe Staff collectively and individually, and only wish that space might permit us to introduce them all to you.



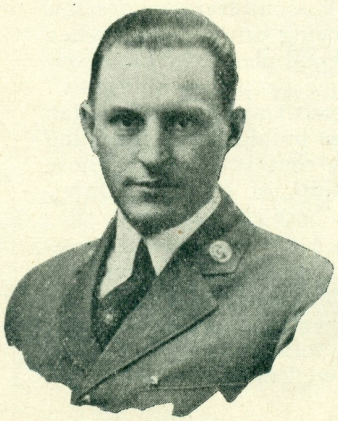
Harry K. Eby
Executive South West District



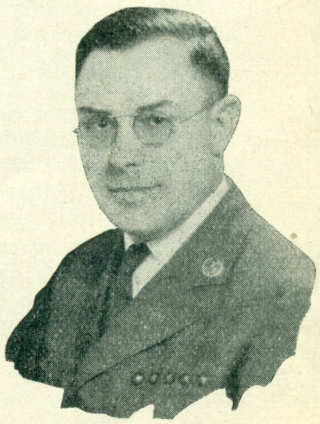
A. A. Kirk
Executive North Shore District

Executive West Side District
DIRECTOR, CAMP BLACKHAWK

Executive Douglas Division
DIRECTOR, CAMP BELNAP



Executive South Shore District
DIRECTOR, CAMP WEST



Executive North West District
DIRECTOR, CAMP CHECAUGAU

District Camps

With large active districts, most with over 100 troops, it was desirable for each district to have a nearby place where they could hold functions. Modern scouters are familiar with Camp Kiwanis in the south and Fort Dearborn in the northwest, but most have probably never thought of these as district camps. But, each district, with the possible exception of Douglas District, had local camps that were primarily for use by units from that district.

Northwest District-Camp Checaugau (Palatine), Camp Doddridge, later Camp Ft. Dearborn

West Side District-Camp Shabbona and later Camp Ft. Dearborn

South West District-Camp Kiwanis (south)

South Shore– Campinland (in the Dunes) and Camp Harrison

North Shore-Camp Kiwanis (north) and later Camp Ft. Dearborn

When the districts were realigned in 1948 the idea of a camp belonging to a district ended. After 1948, Camp Ft. Dearborn, Camp Kiwanis (south) and Camp Harrison were still in operation and they continued to serve the needs of local units for weekend troop camping or district events.

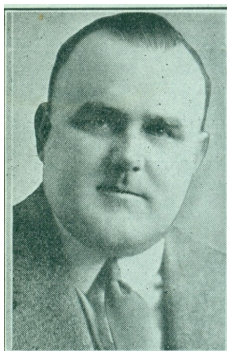
The Early Scouting Professionals

One of the things that I found interesting is the backgrounds of the early scouting professionals. The pioneers were Scout-men; they were generally young men who became Scout leaders in the earliest days. Stuart Walsh was a working newspaperman who was studying journalism at the University of Chicago; he took over a troop while in college and became a scouting professional. In those years, journalism paid better but it didn't matter to Walsh. Carroll Edson had an engineering degree from a Ivy League university, but after he became a Scoutmaster he became a scouting professional. Men who enter the ministry refer to a "calling", they didn't start out to be ministers or priests but somehow they were called to that vocation. It seems to be the same for early scouting professionals.

Chicago supplied the country with capable trained scouting professionals. Chicago Council Executive L.L. McDonald became National Director of Camping. Woodlawn Field Executive, Stuart Walsh became Council Executive in Seattle, Washington. Commissioner Walter Kiplinger became the Executive of Region 7. Deputy District Commissioner Ralph Nodine became the Executive in Milwaukee and later the Region 1 Executive and returned to Chicago as Council Executive. North Shore District Executive James Fitch became Scout Executive in Evanston, then Columbus, Ohio and later served for decades as the Executive of Region 9.

Stuart Walsh
Woodlawn District Ex.
Photo circa 1923

Ralph Nodine



Walter Kiplinger
Photo's circa 1936

James P. Fitch

There are dozens of other examples of outstanding Chicago volunteers entering the scouting profession and going on to expanded careers as scouting profssionals.

1948 Reorganizing the Districts

Chicago is a city of neighborhoods, settled along ethnic lines; Poles in the Northwest, Germans on the North Side, Irish in the Southwest and Bridgeport, African Americans in Bronzeville, Swedes along Clark Street on the far North Side, people of Jewish heritage in Rogers Park, etc. The 1935-1948 districts tried to take factors such as neighborhood differences into account. Assistant District Executives were often hired for their ethnicity. Much in the same way that an African American District would relate well with an African American professional, a scouting professional of German or Italian descent might work well in those neighborhoods. The size of the districts was a problem; events like camp-o-rees required a facility that could host 800 to 1,000 scouts. The districts were divided into neighborhoods, each with a Commissioner and a scouting professional. North Shore District was comprised of Lakeview, Jefferson Park, Albany Park, Ravenswood, Rogers Park, Edgewater, and Norwood Park. North West was comprised of Near North, Lincoln Park, Humboldt Park, Kelvyn Park, Montclair-Cragin, Logan Square and West Town. In all, the five districts with geographic boundaries consisted of thirty eight neighborhoods. It was decided in 1947, that units could be better served by smaller districts and membership might increase with a more pin-point approach.

During 1948, a committee of district and council level scouters drafted a plan to re-organize the council into 24 districts. Part of the plan was to nearly double membership to 50,000 by 1953. Districts would be aligned along neighborhoods and school boundaries. Segregation would be ended and African American units, not in Bronzeville, would be incorporated into regular district boundaries. Some activities had been organized and conducted along neighborhood lines prior to 1949, experimenting to make sure that events could be handled on a smaller basis.

1949 New Districts Reorganizing a Council with eight hundred units from five geographic districts into twenty four was a huge task. Assigning boundaries was simple enough. But, the task required recruiting and training twenty four new District Chairmen, recruiting more Commissioners and hiring scouting professionals. New men required additional training. New roundtable and meeting sites must be secured. New scouting professionals required additional funding. The new plan was put into place in 1949, but not all districts were fully operational until about 1950. As smaller districts struggled, district boundaries were realigned. Segregation was technically ended, but because the neighborhoods were so ethnically and racially divided, African American unit were largely in the Bronzeville neighborhood, which became the new South Central District.

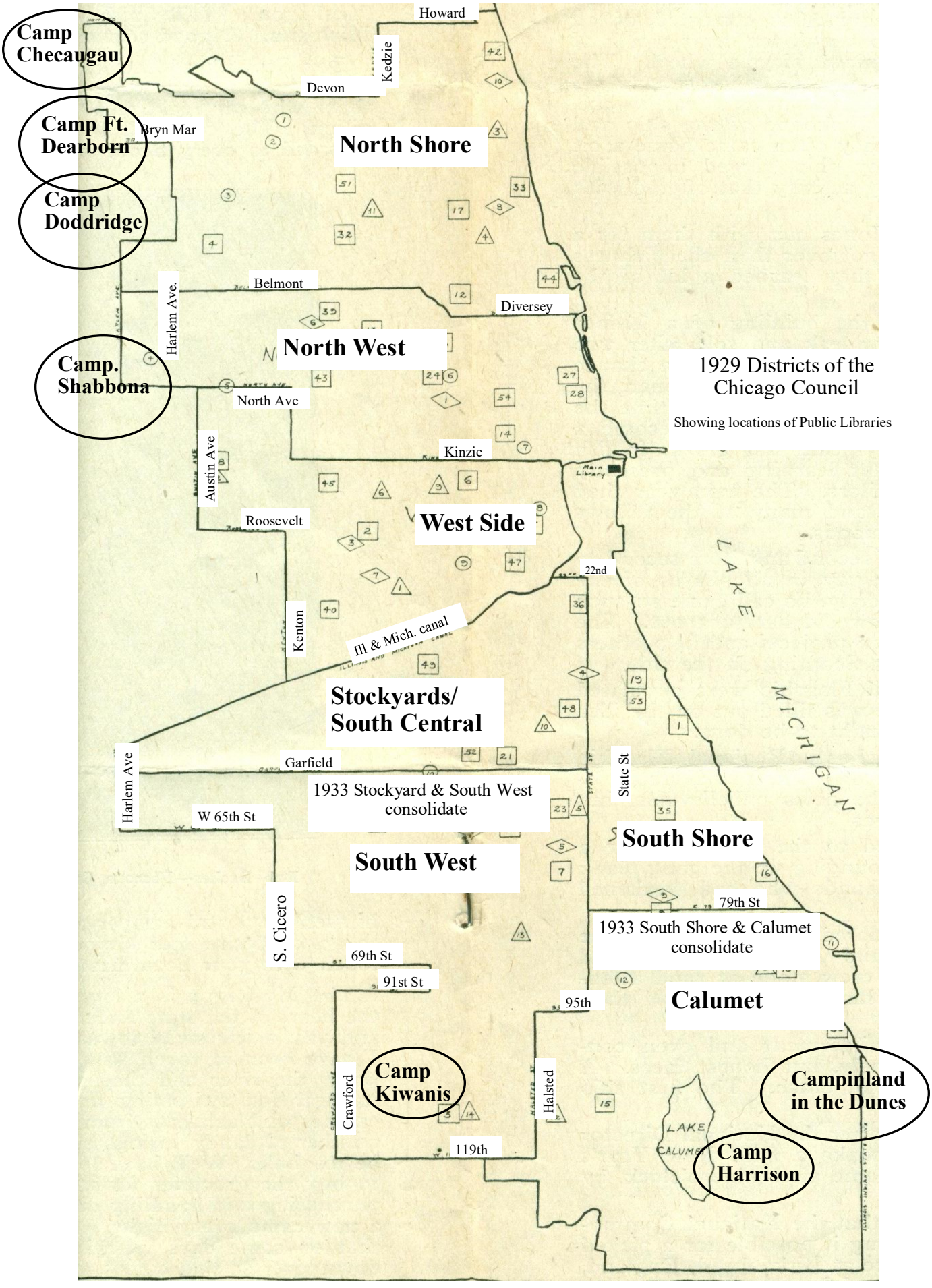
I'm not sure that modern scouters can grasp the size of the district and council in years past. I was a scout in Trailblazer District on the far north east side. My troop was sponsored by the Rogers Park Congregational Church. I attended Eugene Field grade school. Other boys in my neighborhood that attended Eugene Field could chose from three other troops within four blocks of our school. Then there was the large active troop at St. Jerome's Catholic School, just two blocks north and Temple Beth Israel had a troop. During Scout Anniversary Week we'd wear our uniforms to school and it seemed that half of the boys in school were either Cubs or Scouts. The density of scouting was astonishing.

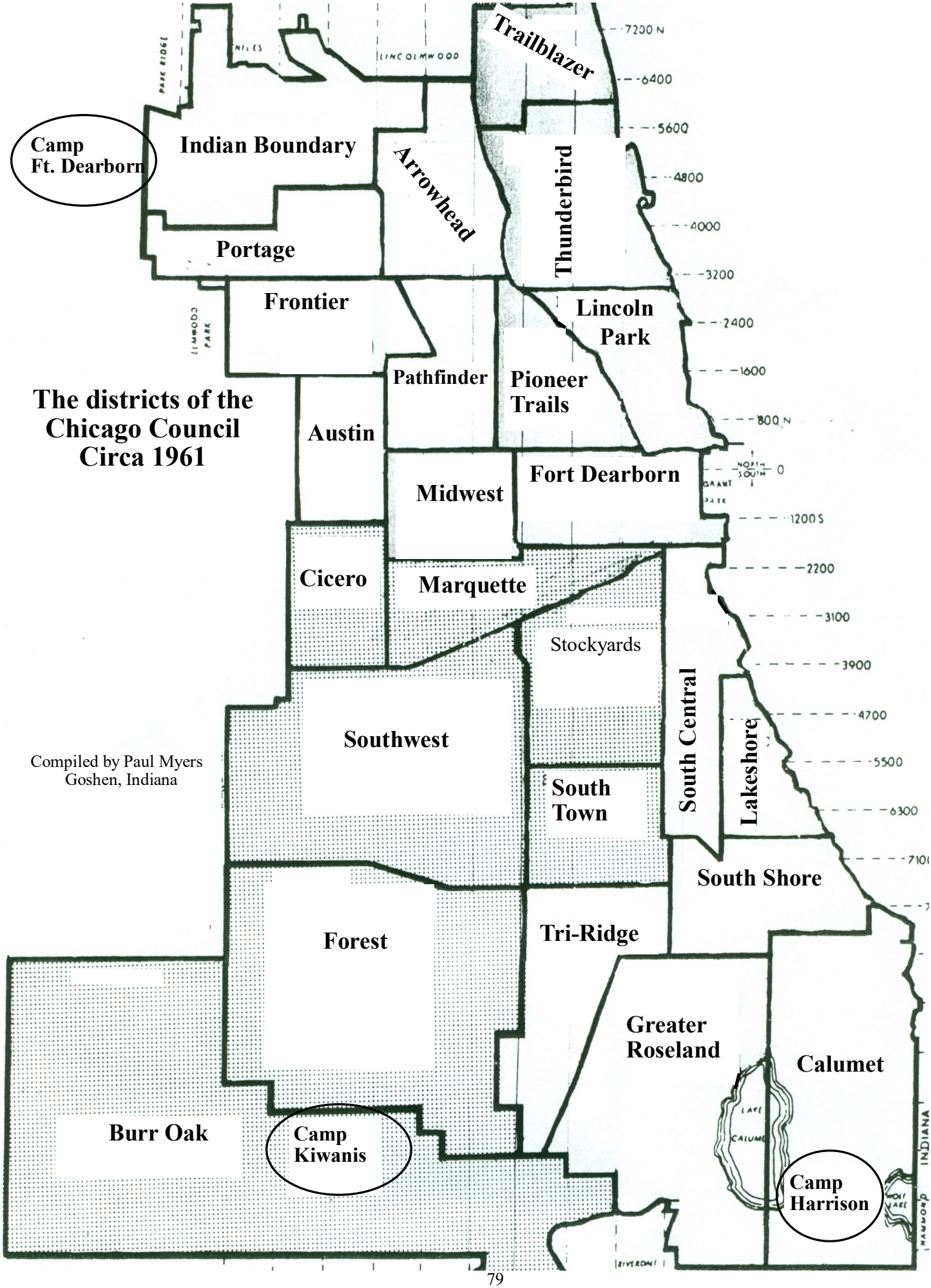
1949-1961 Districts

Arrowhead
Austin
Burr Oak
Calumet
Cicero
Forest
Fort Dearborn-New 1957
Frontier-
Greater Roseland
Indian Boundary
Iroquois
Lake Shore
Lakeview
Lincoln Park-New 1951
Marquette-New 1956
Midwest
Pioneer Trails
Portage
South Central-merged 1956
South Shore
South Town
South West
Stock Yard
Trailblazer
Tri Ridge
Thunderbird-New 1954
West Central District-merged 1957

Districts with no dates were formed 1949-50

In 1949 many of the new districts were holding their first event, others followed in 1950.

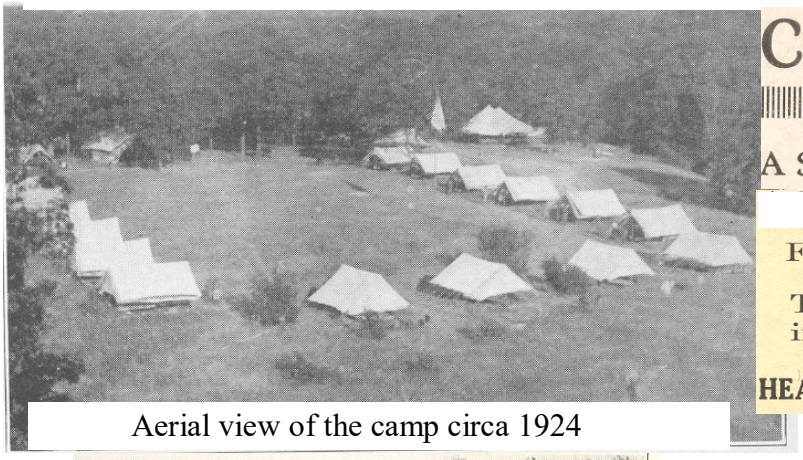

Camp Checaugau
Camp Ft. Dearborn
Camp Doddridge
Camp. Shabbona
Howard
Kedzie
Devon
Bryn Mar
North Shore
Belmont
Harlem Ave.
Diversey
North West
North Ave
Austin Ave
Kinzie
Roosevelt
West Side
22nd
Kenton
Ill & Mich. canal
Stockyards/ South Central
Garfield
Harlem Ave
1933 Stockyard & South West consolidate
W 65th St
South West
S. Cicero
69th St
91st St
State St
South Shore
79th St
1933 South Shore & Calumet consolidate
95th
Calumet
Camp Kiwanis
Crawford
Halsted
119th
Campinland in the Dunes
Camp Harrison
LAKE MICHIGAN
LAKE CALUMET
1929 Districts of the Chicago Council
Showing locations of Public Libraries


Trailblazer
Camp
Ft. Dearborn
Indian Boundary
Arrowhead
Thunderbird
Portage
Frontier
Lincoln
Park
Pathfinder
Pioneer
Trails
The districts of the
Chicago Council
Circa 1961
Austin
Midwest
Fort Dearborn
Cicero
Marquette
Stockyards
Southwest
South
Town
South Central
Lakeshore
South Shore
Compiled by Paul Myers
Goshen, Indiana
Forest
Tri-Ridge
Greater
Roseland
Calumet
Burr Oak
Camp
Kiwanis
Camp
Harrison
7200 N
6400
5600
4800
4000
3200
2400
1600
800 N
0
1200 S
2200
3100
3900
4700
5500
6300
7100

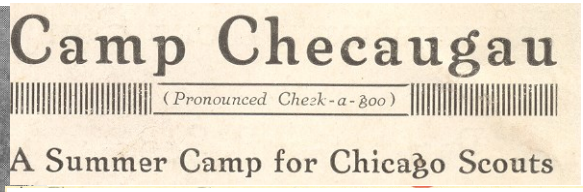
Earliest Chicago District *Summer* Camps

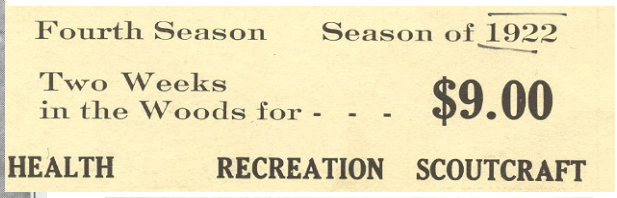
Camp Checaugau-Keesus-Ken Jockety-Shabbona-Yotanka and Camp Wabash

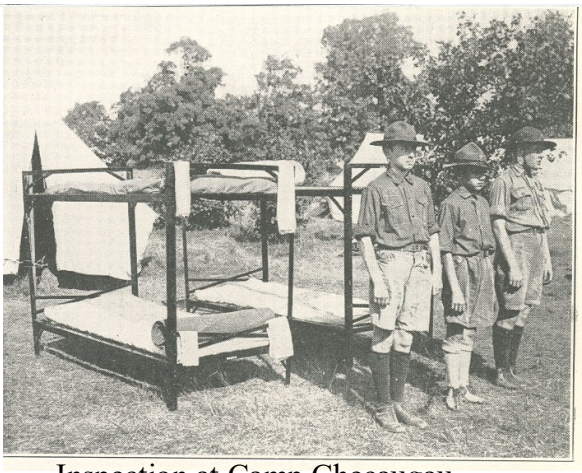
Camp Checaugau for the **Northwest District.** Located thirty one miles northwest of Chicago and two miles north of Palatine, Illinois in a Cook County Forest Preserve. The camp operated as a summer camp from 1919 through 1925. In 1926 a new camp on Big Blue Lake in the Owasippe Camps was opened. The new camp kept the Checaugau name.



Aerial view of the camp circa 1924







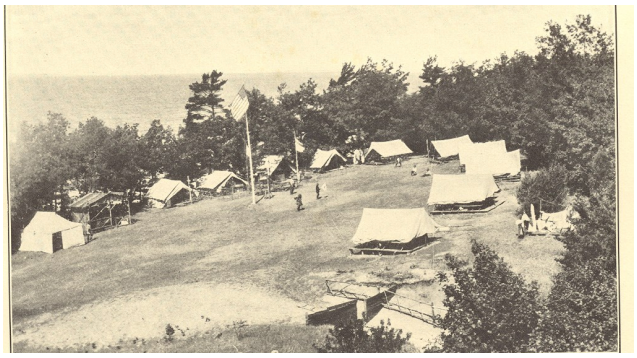
Inspection at Camp Checaugau

Checaugau was a large and successful camp that followed the usual model of most early camps. It was in a Forest Preserve, in close proximity to the Northwest District. Transportation costs were minimal and the cost of camp was low. Camp Checaugau had its own native American lore and in camp promotional material it's stated "*The camp looks down on the old council grounds of the Pottawatomies. Here also met the Winnebagos, Chippewas, Iroquois and Ottawas. West of the camp a half mile, is the Indian burial ground."* The camp promotion brochure to the right is from 1924. At first glance it appears to be an Owasippe brochure that contains information about Camp Checaugau at Owasippe. But the booklet contains information about Camp Checaugau near Palatine, Illinois It's the only known booklet that promotes one of the district camps in conjunction with Owasippe.

Further research is needed to identify where Northwest District camped prior to 1919. It's a possibility they used nearby Camp Shabbonna.

Camp Keesus for the Hyde Park-Woodlawn District

Located on a bluff overlooking Lake Michigan near Grand Haven, Michigan. Camp Keesus was originally founded as a troop camp and operated from about 1911 through 1920. Stuart Walsh writes about Camp Keesus in his book, 13 Years of Scout Adventure, published in 1923. It is believed that the location of the camp later became Camp Showandasee of the Ottawa-Allegan (Michigan) Council which had headquarters in nearby Holland, Michigan



Tents were pitched in a tree-enclosed meadow overlooking Lake Michigan. Photo is circa 1917.

The mess hall built entirely by Scouts themselves in 1917. Photo is circa 1917.

"To Ye Scouts Who Love the Haunts of Nature,
– Keesus is Calling"

PURPOSE—To provide a program of vigorous Scout life, inspired by Nature's glories, is the purpose of Camp Keesus.

"I have found that the impressions which a man receives by the brookside or in the forest make him a better man and a better citizen. NEARNESS TO NATURE has an ELEVATING INFLUENCE on heart and character. NATURE is a SCHOOL for the HARDIER VIRTUES."

—Ex-Pres. GROVER CLEVELAND.

Camp Keesus

NINTH SEASON--JUNE 29-SEPTEMBER 5, 1920

Conducted by

Boy Scouts of America—Chicago Council
Hyde Park-Woodlawn District

The camp staff of 1915. L-R, Stuart Walsh, E. J. Markvart, I.S. Sachs & Harry Walsh. Stuart Walsh was a scouting professional. He was later the Executive in Seattle, WA. He wrote on numerous scouting themes.

The 1915 staff photo illustrates how small these district camps were. Stuart Walsh was the Field Executive, Markvart was an Eagle Scout-college student, Sachs was a teacher and Scoutmaster of Troop 10 in Hyde Park and Harry Walsh was Stuart's father.

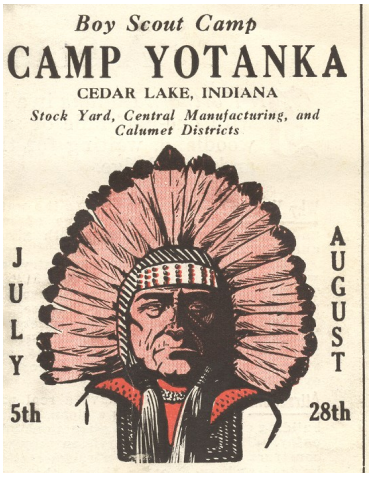
The camp was named for Lake Keesus in Waukesha County, Wisconsin. In 1911 and 1912 Stuart Walsh conducted a troop camp in Wisconsin at Lake Keesus. When the camp moved to Michigan the camp name was kept. There is more written about Camp Keesus because Stuart Walsh had been studying journalism at the University of Chicago. He had been a newspaper reporter prior to becoming a scouting professional. The camp moved from Wisconsin to a location between Muskegon and Holland, Michigan but was moved further south to a location about 9 miles south of Grand Haven, Michigan The camp site was remarkable, overlooking Lake Michigan with a constant lake breeze to fend off mosquitoes and after 1917, with a permanent mess hall. One drawback that kept Camp Keesus from being expanded was the difficulty of travel. Scouts were transported to Michigan on a Goodrich boat, but the trip to camp required smaller boats or vehicles that had to traverse bad roads to transfer boys and equipment. In 1921, the Hyde Park-Woodlawn District camp moved to the new Camp James E. West at Owasippe.

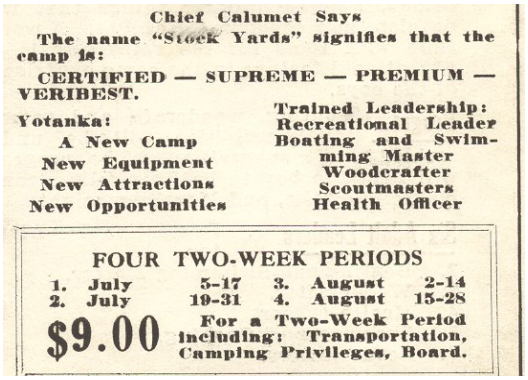
Camp Ken Jockety for the Southwest District.

Located about 35 miles northwest of Chicago on Diamond Lake in Lake County, IL. Known to have operated in 1920, but other years are unknown. The Southwest District was one of the larger districts in the council and it is a shame that so little is known of their early camp. Camp Ken Jockety in Lake County seems quite a distance for Southwest District scouts to travel. But these early camps were often located on private land and it was probably owned by a Southwest District Scouter or a relative. Further research may reveal more about the early Southwest District camps.

Camp Yotanka for the Stock Yard, Central Manufacturing and Calumet Districts.

Located on Cedar Lake, Indiana. Known to have operated in 1919 and 1920 but other years are uncertain. Cedar Lake is south of Hammond, Indiana and near the south side of Chicago.

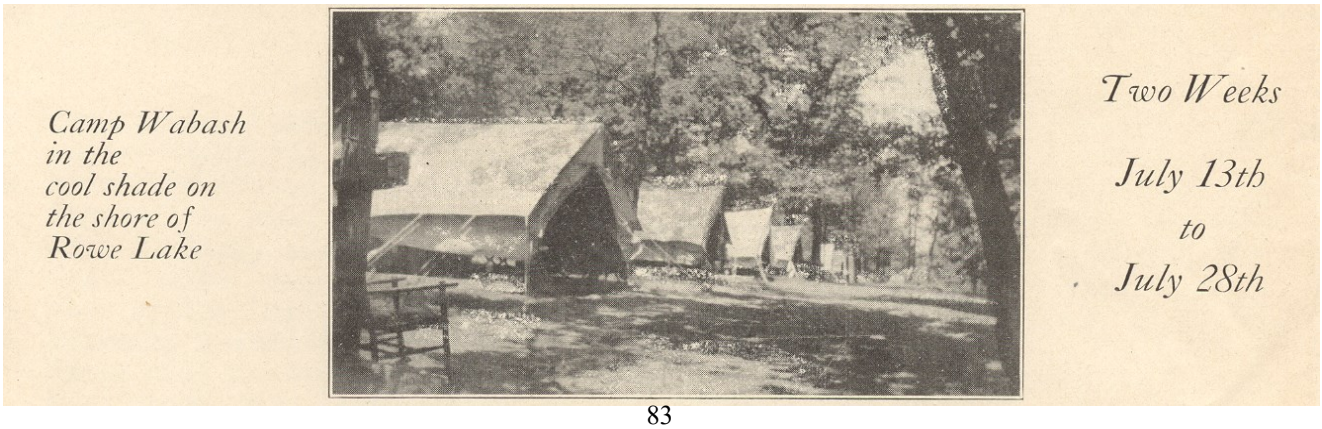




The Southwest District relocated their camp to Camp McDonald at Owasippe in 1922. Calumet District came to Camp West in 1922. It is unknown where Calumet & Central Mfg. Districts camped earlier.

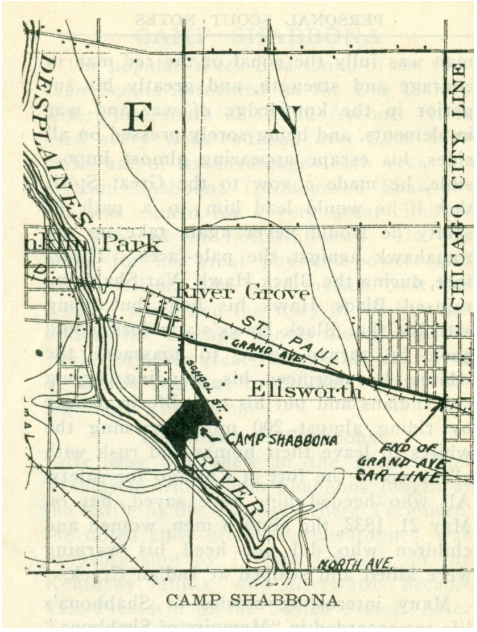
Camp Wabash for the Douglas Division

Located about 14 miles southeast of Benton Harbor Michigan on forty acres at Rowe Lake, the camp was a YMCA camp that the Douglas Division rented for two weeks per year. Little is known about the camp, and it's believed that it operated until Camp Belnap was developed at Owasippe in 1926. The Douglas Division was a segregated district for African American scouts. In this era, most African American's lived in an area known as Bronzeville, just south of downtown. But, the Douglas Division served African American troops no matter their geographic location in the city.

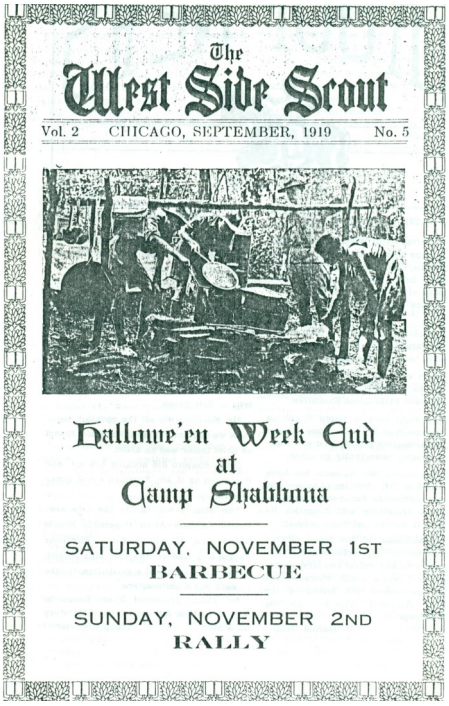


Camp Shabbona West Side District 1914-1925

Camp Shabbona was located on the Des Plaines River between Grand Avenue on the north and North Avenue on the south. Established as early as 1914, and perhaps earlier, it had a permanent structure at about the same time the first dining hall at Owasippe was being built. West Side District troops used Camp Shabbona as a long term summer camp in the earliest years. Chester Spies, the West Side District Secretary and later District Executive kept a District office at Camp Shabbona. Spies was also at camp on most weekends instructing scout skills and teaching merit badges. Council literature from 1914-1920 is full of information about activities at Camp Shabbona. Some West Side District scouts attended Owasippe as early as 1919, but it is believed that most West Side District scouts attended summer camp at Camp Shabbona. In 1926, when Blackhawk was developed at Owasippe, Camp Shabbona closed. Allan Carpenter the Executive of the West Side
District was Blackhawk's first director. 1925 is probably the last year for summer camping at Shabbona. It is claimed that 5,000 scouts per year participated in weekend activities at Shabbona in the earliest years. Chicago Scouts could take the Grand Avenue street car to the end of the line and hike the few miles to camp. The camp was close to Oak Park and the western suburbs and it is believed that troops from these areas used Camp Shabbona.



The Shabbona Pathfinders supervised scouts in weekend camp without troop supervision. The Pathfinder program allowed Scouts to attend weekend activities alone, supervised by the Shabbona Pathfinders.



The Halloween weekend at Shabbona was a yearly activity; six hundred Scouts are reported to have participated in the Halloween weekend in 1917. Literature reveals that a large number of Scouts attended Camp Shabbona **without** home unit leadership. As a historic researcher, I was surprised to learn of Scouts attending a weekend camp "on their own," but it appears to have been a common practice in Chicago Scouting in the earliest years.
In retrospect, this was common in the years before youth protection became necessary. (Although it was probably always necessary, just not implemented until years later) Boys attended neighborhood functions, YMCA's, Boys Clubs, etc, on their own. Many Scouts were attending Owasippe on their own in provisional units. Why couldn't scouts take the street car, often with boys from their patrol and go out to Camp Shabbona? The idea is so alien to modern Scouters that it's unacceptable, but that appears to be the way it was.

Camp Kiwanis-NORTH of the North Shore District in the 1920's

In the Forest Preserve, North of the Des Plaines River at Dam #2. Little is known of Camp Kiwanis-North. In the 10/1927 edition of Scoutcraft it is recorded that "*a summer camp was conducted by Harry Alban and over four hundred fifty boys spent an average of four days there."* Like Camp Shabbona, a paid scouting professional was in camp on weekends to "*assist in passing tests and giving Scout instruction in the various outdoor phases of the program including nature study, cooking and general conduct".*

It appears that Kiwanis-North was another alternative to Owasippe. It is unknown when Kiwanis-North closed. Its a possibility that the earlier camp was renamed Ft. Dearborn.

The Unknown District Camps pre-1926.

From about 1913 through 1926, Chicago Districts and in rare cases, large troops conducted summer camps. It's almost certain that the Northwest District had a summer camp prior to 1919, the origination date of Camp Checaugau, but its name is unknown. It is also believed that South Shore and the Calumet District operated camps in the very early years before Camp Yotanka or Camp Ken Jockety, but again these camps are unknown. I hope that future researchers will learn the names and locations of these earliest camps.

Camp Roosevelt

The Chicago Public Schools operated a summer activities program called Camp Roosevelt. On the internet, I discovered the following information in a publication by the Playground and Recreational Association of America.

"Camp Roosevelt is operated by the Chicago Public Schools to provide summer activities for High School boys with accommodations for younger boys. The camp is divided into three sections. Those who desire to make up school subjects are in what is known as summer school. The R.O.T.C. section is for boys over age fourteen interested in the military and a scout craft section is available to younger boys.

High school facility and athletic directors are selected from the faculty of the Chicago Public Schools. The military instructors are ordered to the camp by the War Department. The Scout instructors are qualified Scoutmasters assigned by the Chicago Chapter of the Boy Scouts. The fee for individual boys is low enough to make the camp available to all."

It is believed the camp was used by Chicago Scouts from at least 1920 through 1924, but I can not find any reference to it in Chicago scouting material. Boys attending Camp Roosevelt on their own is yet another example of Scouts functioning without troop leadership in the early days.

Modern District Camps of the Chicago Council
Doddridge-Fort Dearborn-Harrison-Kiwanis (south)

With individual districts having as many as 100 troops, a nearby camp for local activities was needed. Individual camps were developed as "district" camps. The local District Executive or members of his staff could be in camp on weekends during certain times of the year. Camp Shabbonna and later Camp Ft. Dearborn served the West Side District, Camp Kiwanis (South) the Southwest District, Camp Harrison the South Shore District. The Northwest District used Camp Checaugau (near Palatine) until 1926. Camp Checaugau near Palatine was replaced by Camp Ft. Dearborn for a few years before Camp Doddridge opened in 1936. The North Shore District had Camp Kiwanis-(North) during the 1920's and later used Camp Ft. Dearborn.

Camp Doddridge The use of the property was a gift from the Katherine Kreigh Budd Memorial Foundation. Mr. Britton Budd developed the property in 1926 for what was to be a children's home in honor of his wife Katherine. The camp was located on 100 acres of field and forest in a bend on the Des Plaines River near what is now the Independence Grove Forest Preserve. In the 1930's, the property was loaned to the Council and it operated as a summer camp from 1937 through the mid-1940's. In 1937, Camp Doddridge had 2,396 boy and leader days of summer camp.

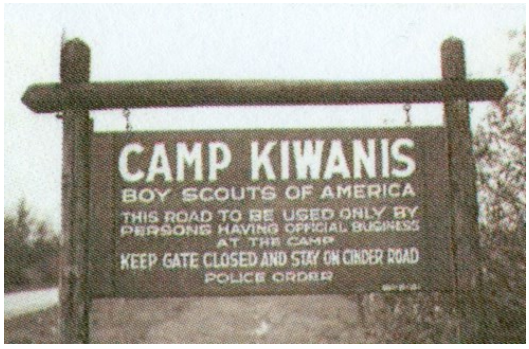
In many ways Camp Doddridge replaced the old North West District, Camp Checaugau. North West District had operated their own camp near Palatine, Illinois from 1919 through 1925. The new Camp Checaugau at Owassippe opened in 1926. The Chicago Council took every effort to provide the North West District with a splendid new camp at Owasippe, but some North West District troops never embraced Owasippe. When Camp Checaugau was closed at Owasippe (in 1933) it was only natural that Northwest District units would gravitate back to a nearby camp. With Blackhawk closed, some West Side District units utilized Doddridge for one week summer camping.

Camp Doddridge opened in 1937 and it was filled by North West and West Side District units. Camp Doddridge was on the edge of the North Shore District but North Shore units had developed a long standing (1912) Owasippe tradition. (Camp Dan Beard) But, it is believed that some North Shore units may have used Doddridge.

Doddridge was promoted council wide as a less expensive alternative to Owasippe and there is evidence that during the war years (1941-45) scout units from all over the city used Doddridge for the opportunity of a one week camp. Much in the way south side units gravitated to Kiwanis.

There is a ghost story about the Camp Doddridge property from it's years as a children's home. For more information, search the www for legends and lore of Illinois, Devils Gate or Katherine Kreigh Budd.

Camp Kiwanis (South)


CAMP KIWANIS
BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA
THIS ROAD TO BE USED ONLY BY
PERSONS HAVING OFFICIAL BUSINESS
AT THE CAMP
KEEP GATE CLOSED AND STAY ON CINDER ROAD
POLICE ORDER

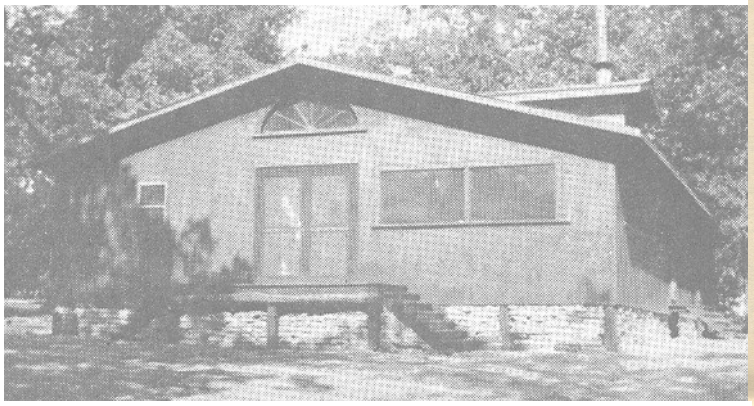
Camp Kiwanis started as a district camp, but became one of the most heavily used camps in the USA. It is largely unknown among national camps and unknown to most troops on the north side of Chicago. With Owasippe so far from the city, boat or train fees could add as much thirty percent to costs. In bad economic times, that could be the difference between going to camp and staying home. Kiwanis in the southern suburbs was just a short trip for half of the troops in the council. A week at Camp Kiwanis was better than no camp.

In the spring of 1917, ninety acres of heavily wooded land on a hill was acquired for scout camping. Plans were developed for a log cabin and full weekend camping facilities. In the earliest years, the camp was called Willow Springs Camp. In the early 1920's, the camp was adopted by local Kiwanis clubs on the south and southwest side. Bounded on the north by 95th St, on the east by 100th Avenue, on the south by 107th St. and on the west by 104th Ave, a mile south of Willow Springs. There was a small lake on the property named Tuma Lake but sometimes called Lake Kiwanis. The January 1926 Scoutcraft reported that in 1925 three Kiwanis Clubs on the South Side made it possible for 6,074 scouts to camp comfortably on their weekend hikes. The camp was built to accommodate 200 scouts at a time and was full to capacity almost every weekend. There were three log cabins, sixteen pyramid tents, double deck cots, stoves, tables, benches and other equipment. The tents were kept warm in winter by small sheet iron stoves. In 1930, ten buildings could accommodate a total of one hundred fourteen scouts. One lodge had room for twenty two scouts, three shacks take twelve each, four take ten each and two take eight each. Camp Kiwanis was sponsored by the Englewood, Garfield Boulevard, Woodlawn and the Chicago Kiwanis Clubs, for Scouts of the South Central, South Shore and South West Districts.

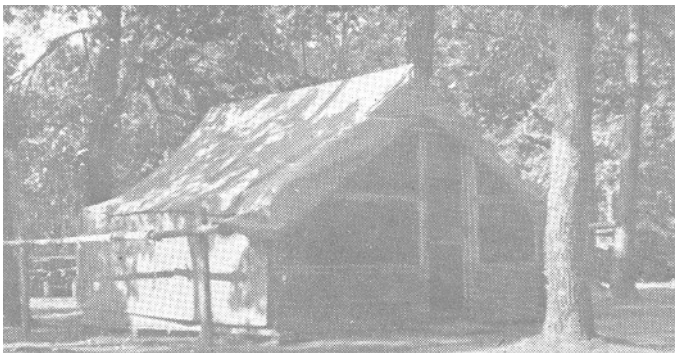
During the economic depression of the 1930's, Camp Kiwanis was pressed into service as a summer camp and operated through at least 1963. The idea of a one week (five day) camp was appealing to some units and transportation costs were minimal. During this era, Owasippe was almost exclusively a two week camp and transportation costs could be nearly one third the cost of camp. In 1931, Kiwanis was open for eight one week periods and the weekly camp periods were adjusted yearly from a high of eleven in 1949 to a low of six weekly periods in 1942. Over a thirty year period, tens of thousands of Chicago Scouts experienced summer camp at Kiwanis. In the 1930's, the council used a statistic called "boy and leader days" to record attendance at summer camp. In the 1937 summer season, Camp Kiwanis had 6,860 boy and leader days while the six camps operating at Owasippe had 31,915. Summer, spring, winter or fall, Camp Kiwanis was full to capacity.

Most of the annual camp promotion brochures included Kiwanis as an option, but there is little in the way of campers manuals or printed information (that I could find) about summer camp. Camp insignia exists in the form of badges, but it is unclear if the earliest badges were earned like those at Owasippe.

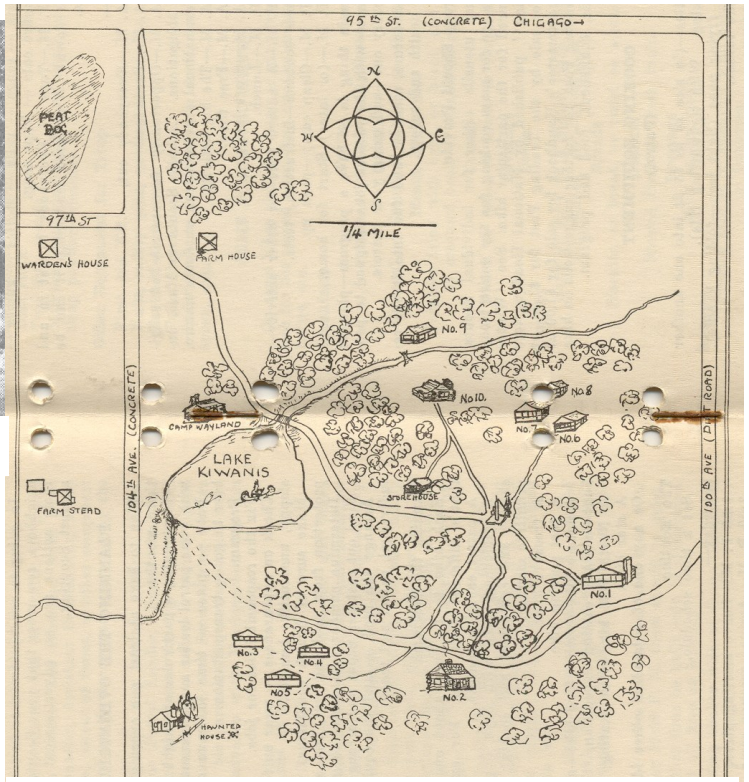
1941-1960, Kiwanis badges used the same design motif as Owasippe



Dining Hall at Camp Kiwanis (new 1935)



Typical summer camp tent at Kiwanis



1930 map of Camp Kiwanis
This map shows the name of the lake as Lake Kiwanis but elsewhere it is named Lake Tuma

Camp Kiwanis Promotion

In 1934 council camp promotion material offered Camp Kiwanis as an alternative to Owasippe.

(1934) ***Camp Kiwanis-Harry K. Eby-Director*** (District Executive of the Southwest District)
An inexpensive camp with simple equipment, in an attractive location in the Palos Park Forest Preserves near Willow Springs. The camp has a small, but competent staff, and a program that's good fun. Scoutcraft achievement is emphasized even though the length of the stay limits the variety of programs offered. This camp is operated to guarantee each boy five days of camping experience.

Nine periods of five days each*-Monday to Friday inclusive. First period begins July 2nd-the last period ending August 31st.*

Board Rates*: $3.50 (with troop) $4.00 (as individual) Additional periods $4.00*
Transportation*: Nominal-arranged by troop or the individual*

(1949) ***Camp Kiwanis Victor Alm-Director Harold Noel-Assistant Director***
One of the most attractive natural areas in the Cook County Forest Preserves. A small lake adds to its charm and makes possible swimming and water sports.

Eleven Periods*: Five days, Monday through Friday, beginning June 22nd.*
Final period beginning August 31st. ONE period is maximum permitted any Scout.

Rates: *$3.50 per period, plus .50 if not accompanied by acceptable Scout leadership from home troop.*

Transportation: *Street car or bus for a nominal rate, or by automobile provided by parent or troop.*

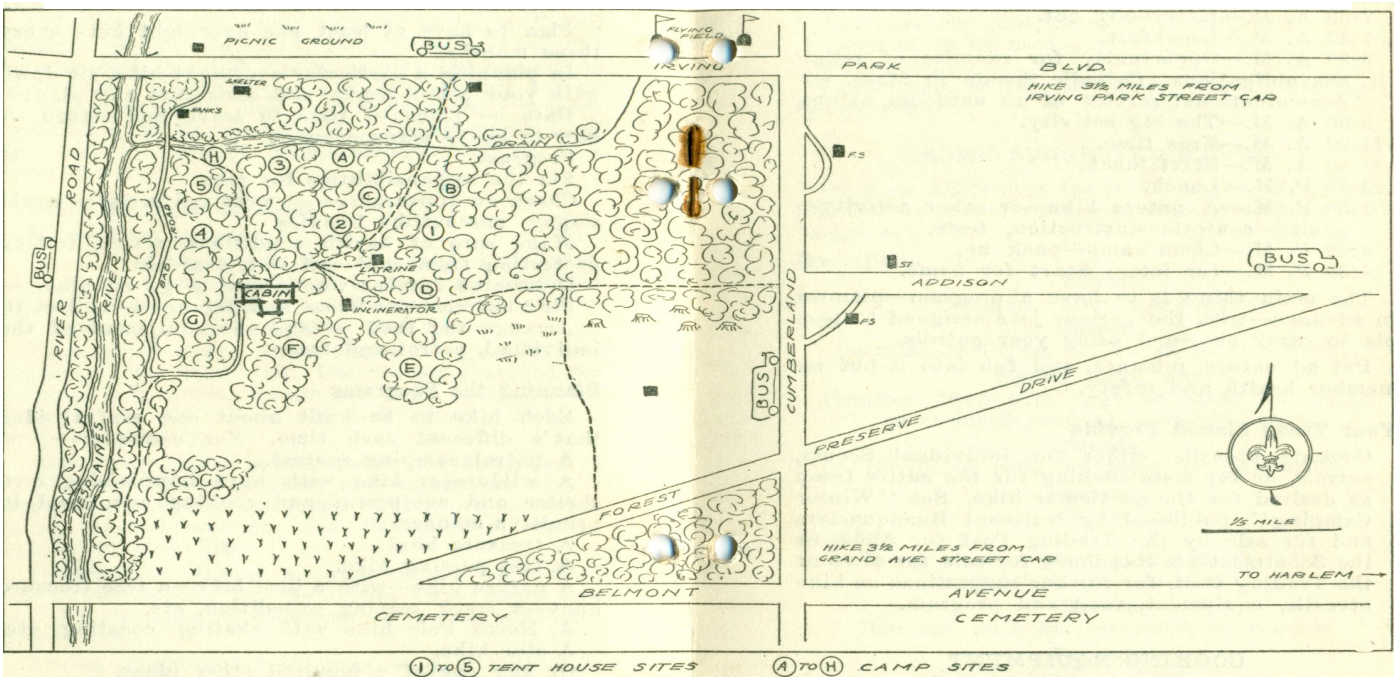
Camp Ft. Dearborn

Ft. Dearborn, like Camp Kiwanis on the south side, was a vital part of weekend scout activities. Opening in the late 1920's, in the Cook County Forest Preserve east of the Des Plaines River, 1/4 of a mile south of Irving Park Blvd. Camp was a three mile hike from the end of the Belmont or Irving Park streetcar line and in the early days scouts could attend as individuals on weekends.

In 1930, there were six tent shacks, which could be reserved and eight individual patrol or troop camp sites. A cabin housed the caretaker who was sometimes a scouting professional who worked weekends at the camp. Ft. Dearborn was sponsored by the Kiwanis and Lions Clubs of the North and West Side for troops of North West, West Side and North Shore Districts. Among the clubs participating are the Rogers Park, Logan Square, Lincoln Park, North Shore, and West Side Kiwanis Clubs and the Triangle, Northwest and Austin Lions Clubs.

Victory Farm Volunteer Camp

During World War II, a Victory Farm Camp was held at Camp Ft. Dearborn. A scout had to be a minimum of 15 years old to participate. Scouts would be bussed to local farms requiring labor and paid .45 per hour up to .55 per hour for the third week. Camp fee was $1.00 per week, paid from wages. Breakfast and dinner were prepared by cooks and a box luncheon was furnished. There was opportunity for advancement & merit badge work during afternoons and evenings.



Red cloth white cloth turquoise cloth orange cloth

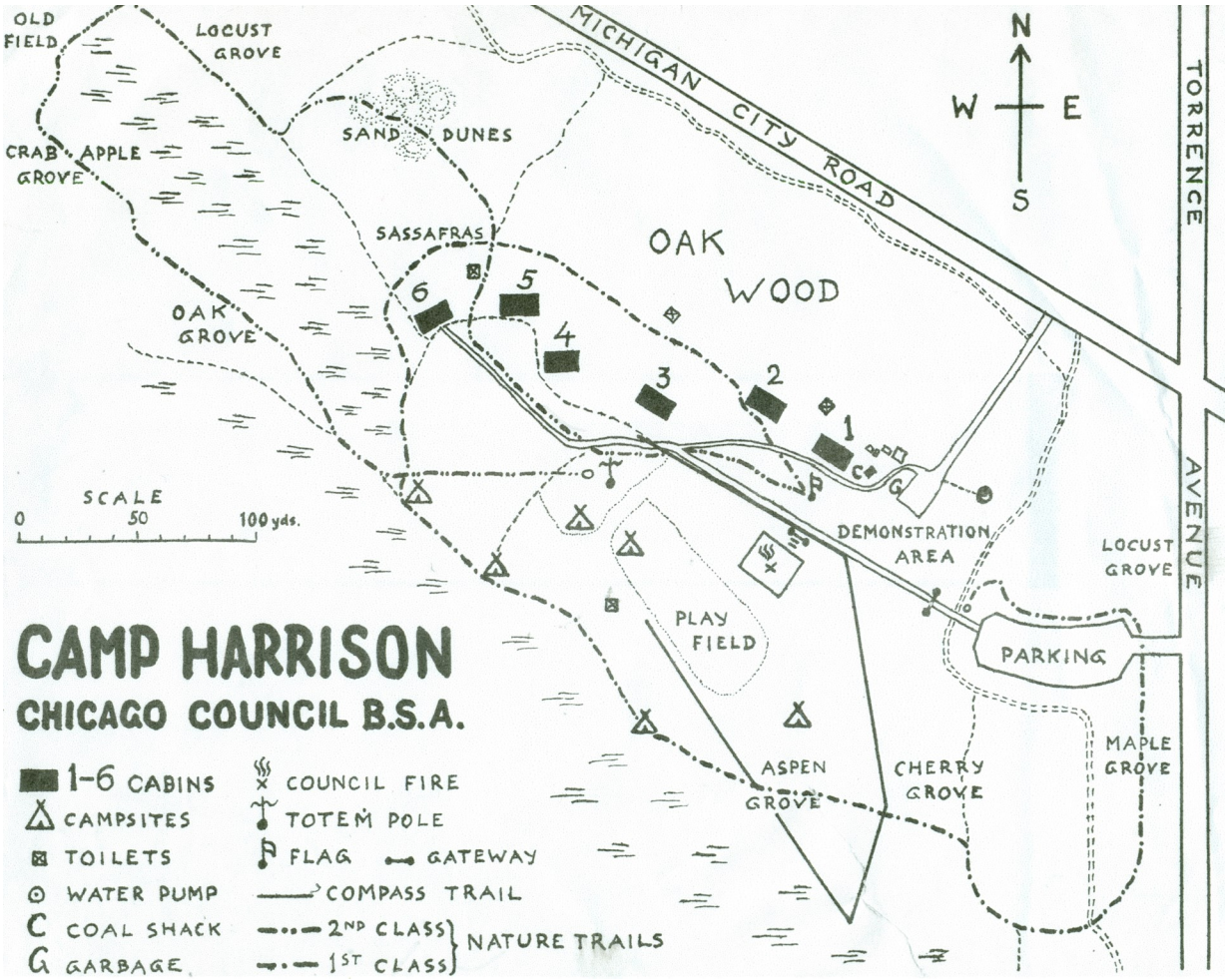
Camp Ft. Dearborn badges exist with different colored background the meaning (if anything) is unknown. The badges are circa 1946-1952.

Campinland (in the Dunes)

South Side troops had been camping in the Indiana Dunes since the earliest years. Campinland was located near the sand dunes in what is now the Ogden Dunes State Park. The property was owned by the Inland Steel Company, and was on loan to the scouts from the 1920's through at least 1937 and perhaps later. The Chicago Council provided a weekend Camp Director and during the summer a lifeguard. The camp was used primarily by South Shore District units, but because of the unique experience afforded by the sand dunes, troops from all over the city used the camp.

Camp Harrison in the Forest Preserves near Thornton, IL.

Camp Harrison was developed in the late 1920's as a local camp for the South Shore District. It was located just west of Torrance Ave., south of Michigan City Rd with 159th St (Rt 6) on the south in what is now the Shabbonna Woods Forest Preserve. It had six cabins, six camp sites and a camp fire ring. Camp Harrison continued in operation into the early 1960's. (confirmed in use in 1963)



AFTER WOODS

In the Foreword I stated that the research took me in all kinds of unintended directions. I am expanding on some of the things that surprised me so that future researchers can investigate them.

Council/Camp affiliates or franchises? In studying Owasippe, I ran across this statement; *"The National Council is an affiliation of the local councils."* A careful reading of this statement yields some interesting observations. Those familiar with modern Scouting would agree that the local BSA Council is almost a "franchise" of the National BSA. Like McDonalds the program/ hamburgers offered in one location are identical to those elsewhere. Headquarters dictates everything down to how much ketchup to use or how the camp is to be laid out. Scouters/Managers are trained to exacting specifications from the national handbook. Regional Managers (Area Directors) visit the locations to ensure that things are running according to plans. An affiliated group, has similar goals but the affiliate is allowed to make choices about how things are done locally. In the business world, Ace Hardware would be an example. Independent hardware stores use the Ace logo and tie into national advertising. They can purchase goods from the Ace warehouse or they can purchase goods elsewhere and handle items that the national warehouse may not offer. In the earliest years, Boy Scout councils were "affiliated." In the very early years, programs weren't yet developed. Chicago led in camping so Chicago methods were adopted elsewhere. The Chicago Scout Executive became the National Director of Camping. Over the years things changed, with the most important change related to the council/national relationships. Reading the minutes of 1924-1926-1928 National Professional Meeting it becomes clear. Some councils were using programs that the National Council did not approve. Councils had younger boy programs before the Cub pilot programs and councils did other things that displeased National. As the BSA grew, more and more dictates flowed from the national level and it was expected that these recommendations would be carried out on the local level. It came down to the Council Executive. He was expected to implement National policy. There are numerous examples of early independent Scout Executives doing what they pleased and as long as it pleased the local Executive Board, National couldn't do much about it. As independent minded Executives retired, the BSA Personnel Service supplied the councils with a list of qualified/acceptable Executives. Sooner or later, councils that thought of themselves as affiliates became franchises. Perhaps this was necessary for the BSA to grow. Understanding these situation helps explain why some things were so different.

Camp Names I was surprised to discover that a new Scout Executive and District Executive, fresh from the home office, would name a new camp for their former boss. That's what happened with the naming of Camp James E. West in 1921. At that time West wasn't yet the revered (and feared) leader that he became; he had only been at the head of the BSA for ten years. There were probably dozens of important individuals that a new camp could be named for; Stamford White had died just four years earlier. Stuart had been a council leader since 1910 and L. L. McDonald was the National Director of Camping, not to mention any of the Scouting pioneers, Boyce, Seaton, Beard, etc. yet the camp was named for James E. West. After the naming of Camp West, it seems that it became necessary to re-name Camp Owasippe and Dan Beard was honored and another camp honored L.L. McDonald. What discussions there must have been about naming Camp West to honor someone that most Chicago Scouts and Scouters didn't know. At the time, the Owasippe camps were sometimes known as the Stamford White, Owasippe Camps. The final bit of the name game came with the re-naming of Camp McDonald to Camp Stuart. Why wasn't McDonald renamed for A. Stamford White? It is my belief that it was because in 1935 the camps were called the A. Stamford White Owasippe Camps. Somehow, White's name was dropped but Stuart remained. I suspect these changes weren't arrived at lightly, but the story is unknown. It's an interesting bit of history that the founder and early financier of the camp, A. Stamford White's name, is lost and unknown to generations of Owasippe campers.

Scout Executives. I assembled a listing of Council Executives with emphasis on who they were and where they had served before Chicago. After developing the listing, I became interested in why so many Executives had such short tenure; eight Executives between 1910 and 1927 with most leaving Scouting after Chicago. Executives in other councils were building "empires" yet Chicago couldn't keep a man for more than a couple of years. In the earliest years, the Council Executive Board and the Council President took a much more active role in council affairs. The role of the Council Executive was still developing and it wasn't until the late 1920's that active Council Boards were replaced with more compliant Executive Boards. Prior to E.U. Goodman, the Chicago Council Executives were new to scouting. Council Executives may have been hired for their management abilities but men who had been on the Executive Board for years were running the council. I was especially interested in George Stephenson who seems to have been an exemplary Executive and who oversaw the expansions of Owasippe. It appears that he was well respected on the national level; his comments on program and policy can be read in the minutes of the 1924 & 1926 Professional Training Meetings. He was scheduled (in 1926) to be a committee head and discussion leader at the 1928 Meeting. His Chicago employment contract was to be renewed in December of 1926, yet he was gone in February 1927. Was his contract not renewed or did he hold out for unknown reasons or was it renewed in December and something came up in January? In any case he was "gone" from Scouting in 1927. E.U. Goodman's arrival was the pivotal moment at which Chicago began to function as a modern council. He wasn't beholden to an Executive Board to tell him what Boy Scouting was. He remade scouting in Chicago and replaced most of the Executive Board in the brief four years he was in the city. This was a national trend in the late 1920's. Pioneering Executive Boards, and to some degree, pioneering professionals were eased out of scouting. In the early years, when the very nature of scouting was being developed, program men and men of vision and action were needed. By 1927, Scouting was thought to be fully formed and the outdoorsmen and program men were replaced by men with administrative abilities. I've written about how Goodman changed the way the Chicago Council operated in 1927, and although they were unpopular at the time, it became the modern way.

Independent Districts I was surprised to discover that the districts were nearly autonomous and the Owasippe camps were closely connected to the districts. Chicago had been organized with the power in the districts. The District or Field Executive operated from a headquarters office in the district and the individual districts were larger than ninety five percent of the councils in this era. The camps at Owasippe were closely connected to the district with the District Executive serving as Camp Director. After Stephenson left, in 1927, the new Council Executive (E. U. Goodman) put an end to local autonomy and initiated central control. Was this Goodman instituting the "Philadelphia way" in Chicago or was it the wish of the Council Executive Board, or even the demand of the National BSA. Did Stephenson choose to leave the council rather than implement the policy? Four of the five District Executives left Chicago within the year, with most going on to expanded careers in Scouting. Did they leave because of the changes or because of Goodman? After conducting this research it occurs to me that in the early years there was no "correct" way to organize large councils. The Philadelphia method seems to have emerged as the approved method. Central authority in the Scout Executive with centralized administration. Only in Chicago had District Executives been recognized as members of the Executive Staff. In other councils and in later years, District Executives seem to be entry level scouting professionals. But, in Chicago in the early years they were not entry level, they were capable administrators handling districts as large as many of the biggest council in the USA. When the council divided into twenty six districts the caliber of men that were needed changed. A man of certain qualifications is needed to administer a district of one hundred plus units. A less qualified (experienced) man could operate a district of twenty five or thirty units.

Camp/Council Finances

I repeatedly read that the Council was continually short of funds and little was available for improvements at Owasippe. I've read that sometimes a historic researcher will look at a photo or read something and a light will go off. Suddenly you'll understand something that had been hidden. That's what happened to me when I saw the 1948 council employee photo (on page 60) and the Owasippe Staff photo (page 41). Suddenly I was able to understand why funds were continually short. The Chicago Council had grown into a huge bureaucracy. When the council expanded into 24 districts, each with an Executive and a secretary the operating budget exploded. I haven't delved into financial records, but I can estimate what it takes to employ 61 full time people, provide them with a place to operate, expenses and employment benefits. With such operating overhead, there would be little money left for anything else. The same point could be made about the 116 people on Owasippe Staff. In the early years the District Executive did double duty (for the same salary) as a Camp Director. In later years the scouting professionals usually stayed in the city and others were employed to run the camps. With so many employees, both at camp and in the council, managers were necessary and executive positions required more compensation than field or operations. The Chicago Council was constantly raising funds just to meet operating expenses.

In 1948 when the council was planning for dramatic increases in membership it seems that some thought should have been given to renovating Owasippe. My guess is that the financial challenges of hiring so many new scouting professionals (Five districts expanded to twenty four) precluded any considerations at Owasippe. Twelve years later a financial campaign for Owasippe was undertaken and it was acknowledged that the camps were not in need of repair, but rather were dilapidated and obsolete. How this happened is open to debate, but the why seems clearly to be that the council had too much overhead and not enough money.

Endowing Owasippe

In the 1980's the BSA began working to develop endowments. National BSA and individual councils started soliciting funds for endowments. Endowments are not a new idea, the popular Philmont Scout Ranch in New Mexico was endowed by the Waite Phillips foundation with a office building in Oklahoma City in the 1940's. Should fees from Philmont be unable to sustain the scout ranch, revenue from the office building can be used to keep the ranch economically viable. The Chicago Council has always had its share of wealthy influential individuals on the Executive Board. Hundreds, if not thousands, of successful individuals who grew up in the city had good experiences at Owasippe as youth. It's a mystery to me why an endowment fund was-n't begun for Owasippe in the modern era. There are hundreds of individuals who might not wish to donate to a Chicago Area Council operating fund but who might set aside proceeds from a piece of property, stocks, bonds or even $25,000. or $50,000. from their estate to their beloved Owasippe. If such a fund had been begun in the past ten or twenty years there would have been no need to save Owasippe.

Come With Your Troop or Stay All Season. This was a theme at Owasippe from the earliest years; understanding its meaning allowed me to realize that individual Scouts came to Owasippe without their troops. Once I realized this, I went back and studied documents that I had read previously and the meaning became clear. Scouts were welcome at camp with or without their troop leaders. To a veteran Scouter this is ridiculous, but thinking it over, it seems reasonable. The children at the White Lake Music Camp that Owasippe's founders observed in 1910 didn't go to camp with their local music teachers. Boys attended Boys Club or the YMCA as individuals. Many pioneer scouting professionals had YMCA training; they knew that boys could function as individuals. When I found information on Camp Shabbona, I learned that they had "Camp Pathfinders" to supervise boys who rode the streetcar alone to the end of the line and hiked to camp. Camp Kiwanis-North also had adults in camp on weekends and scouts could come alone or with their patrols. I was bewildered; I never heard of such things in Scouting. How could you be a Scout without home unit leadership? I researched early Scout handbooks and discovered that there was very little in the Handbooks about long term summer camp. I read in a 1931 Camp Mitigwa (Des Moines, Iowa) that the "*old way of camping was over*; *Scouts would have to attend Camp with their troops under troop leadership".* The pamphlet didn't say what the old way was, but it seems clear that scouts had been attending camp in provisional units. Scouts in Chicago and Des Moines and all over the country were attending camp as individuals, it was a widespread practice that National BSA was trying to end. The 1931 date in the Camp Mitigwa booklet is interesting, that was the year that E.U. Goodman became National Director of Program. Goodman had been a proponent of troop camping with home unit leadership, but his policies didn't have any lasting effect on Owasippe. Scouts could attend Owasippe (and Kiwanis) as individuals without home unit leadership, as late as the 1960's.

A Camp too Far. As soon as the effects of the 1930's depression were felt, individuals in the Chicago Council must have realized that Owasippe was too far away (about 200 miles from downtown.) Philadelphia had its earliest camp near Lancaster, Pennsylvania, but gave it up for a camp on Treasure Island which was at the end of a local city street car line. New York City's famous Ten Mile River Camps are about a hundred miles from the city, but the earlier camps were closer. Camps serving other large cities, Atlanta, Los Angeles, Minneapolis etc, are all in close proximity to the cities. It seems that leaders in Chicago recognized the distance problem and the council maintained local camps, near the districts. In a 1960 funds solicitation booklet, it is stated that *"very little in the way of camp improvements was put into Owasippe after 1933.*" It is my opinion that with the operating costs and overhead needs of the growing professional staff of the Chicago Council there was little money left for camp, but it's also possible that a conscious decision was made not to put funds in Owasippe. The depression and WW II were bad times and fund raising would be difficult. But, why wasn't a capital campaign undertaken in 1948 when plans were made to double membership or in the go-go years of the 1950's? If the Council was planning to double membership in 1948, why weren't funds put into Owasippe or additional nearby camps developed? It's easy to second guess history, but Chicago Council had outstanding leaders, both on the professional staff and the Executive Board, I can't understand why action wasn't taken. As late as 1960 it was realized that the distance was a problem. The 1960 Camp Capital Campaign booklet states "*that with the new super highway, Owasippe will be* ***only four hours*** *from the city by automobile.".*

The founding of a camp so far from the city is another subject that intrigues me. Elsewhere I write about the demographics of the Boy Scouts and how the organization changed to incorporate boys from all economic backgrounds. The businessmen/scouters who founded Owasippe couldn't envision the Boy Scouts becoming a mass movement. The earliest photos help tell the story; most scouts in pre-1925 camp photos are in full uniform (see 1921 Camp West Photo on page 38) Scouts in later photos are noticeably less "well dressed." Photographers sought to capture scouts in uniform, but with fewer scouts wearing uniform, it became more difficult. In later years, boys from all socioeconomic levels became scouts. Owasippe was built as a camp for the sons of professionals or managers; costs were not given much consideration. As scouting grew, the sons of working men wanted to attend Owasippe, but the travel costs and costs of a full service camp made it more difficult. In the early 1920's, there were few working class families who had sons in scouting. It's a testament to scouting that we embrace all boys, but the founders of Owasippe did not foresee this.

Anniversaries & Birthdays

Under most circumstances important dates are usually recorded somewhere in a permanent historic record. Should one somehow forget their birthday they can access birth or Social Security records. If a married man forgets his wedding anniversary he can ask his wife, although the longer one is married, sometimes the year becomes blurred. In researching Owasippe I felt like the long married man who couldn't recall the exact year.

The 1918 Camp Manual states that; *Camp Owasippe was established in 1912 on the beautiful shores of Crystal Lake, four miles from Whitehall in Muskegon County, Michigan. The first year it was known as Camp White, but in 1913 the name was changed to the present one. (the camp name is not specifically stated)* **A camp brochure from 1918 should be authoritative about events just six years earlier**.

The 1923 camp brochure states that 1923 is the Twelfth Season (of the) Owasippe Scout Camps **There is no historic information about camp in the 1923 brochure but somehow camp got a year older.**

The 1925 Camp Manual tells a different story.
It is as old as scouting itself and perhaps the best known scout camp in the USA. In 1910 Mr. D. W. Pollard Scout Executive of Chicago established the camp and called it Camp White in honor of the late Mr. A. Stamford White, who was then President of the Chicago Council. In 1911 the camp was given the name Camp Owasippe. **This is historically inaccurate because Mr. White passed away in 1918, not 1910. In the earliest year Pollard was the Council Secretary. The council was operated by the Executive Board, the paid professional was the secretary.**

Local Whitehall newspaper accounts shed some light. (Thank you Jim Schlichting)

6/*1911 North Shore District of the Chicago Council establishes a camp on land donated by Whitehall merchants. A site was cleared, a mess hall erected and a well dug.*

Whitehall Forum 6/1912 the mess hall was finished in early summer

Whitehall Forum 6/28/1912 A big white circus tent erected on the camp grounds serves as the mess hall. Scouts rush for food prepared by Negro chefs who's cooking shanty has the distinction of being the first building erected on the camp grounds.

Unknown publication, but recorded in Jim Schlichting's research

6/*28/1912 The first transportation to camp was aboard the S.S. Carolina. Boarded in the Chicago River and sat sail at 8 AM to cross Lake Michigan and arrive at the Colby Dock in Whitehall at 5:00 PM. The 100 campers then had a 3.5 mile hike to camp. They marched with bugles blaring and drums beating while merchants and residents waved a friendly greeting.*

8/1912 A total of 839 campers, leaders and visitors attended. 235 stayed one week, the rest two.

The early historic record seems to indicate that while there were workmen and perhaps scouts working on the property in 1911, the first major use of the property as an organized Boy Scout summer camp was 1912. Years later, in an effort to enhance the reputation of Owasippe as not only the premier scout camp, but also the oldest, the 1911 date was used.
In the 1970's, the original camps were closed and the famous Crystal Lake property abandoned. Generations of unparallel excellence in scout camping in a unique and wonderful setting gives Chicago Scouters enough to brag about, how many consecutive years we did it seem unimportant.

Make Your Reservation Now!

Date_____ 1919

Application Blank

I wish to enroll my son (full name)_____

of troop_____, _____ District

in Camp O-wa-sip-pe for the_____

period (date, from_____ to

_____ of 1919) subject to the terms and regulations below and in the Camp circular.

Parent's Signature

_____

Address _____

Telephone _____

Scout's Agreement

On my honor I will do my best to prove myself a worthy Scout in every way while at Camp.

I am especially desirous to pass the following tests:

_____

_____

Scout's Signature

_____

Approved by

_____

Scoutmaster

TERMS: One dollar ($1.00) of Camp fee to accompany this application, and the remainder, $11.50 for the thirteen day period or $5.75 for the six day period, to be paid on departure for Camp at the boat.

NOTE: This application should be transmitted through the Scoutmaster to the District Headquarters, or if there is no District Headquarters, direct to the Chicago Council Headquarters, 37 So. Wabash Avenue.

Do not write in this space!

Deposit of $1.00 received by

_____ Date_____

Balance $_____ received by

Date

Camp O-wa-sip-pe—1919

IT is time to think of Camp again. O-wa-sip-pe is already being put into shape to receive the 1919 campers. Mr. Sampson, last year's director, has been re-engaged and will make this year's Camp the best we have ever had. He learned all about the Camp while on the job last year, how it is located, equipped, what the Scouts like about it, and how it can fill the Scout's idea of a good time and teach him real Scouting while he is enjoying himself.

Mr. Sampson knows the job and we have told him to go ahead and make this Camp the best ever, and he will do it.

We will have four camping periods of two weeks each, beginning July 7th, July 21st, August 4th, and August 18th. The last period will end August 30th.

The Camp fee will be the same as last year, $12.50 for the two weeks' period. This includes boat fare. For the boy who can only attend one week, we make a rate of $6.75.

The Camp is open to all registered Scouts of Chicago and vicinity, who have the written consent of their parents and permission of their Scoutmaster. These are the only restrictions and the boy may go any period that he chooses, because no period is set aside for any special district.

We also urge that the boy who cannot attend for the two weeks' period make a special effort to be present for one week, because even in that short time he will get a new insight into Scouting.

The selection of adult leadership has been given careful consideration and each leader has been selected for his ability to manage the particular part of the program that he is to carry out, keeping in mind, of course, that he must be a man of unquestionable moral standing and

WILLIAM M. SCUDDER, Chairman, Camping Committee — E. URNER GOODMAN, Scout Executive — R. DOUGLAS STUART, President

Camp Blackhawk

Boy Scouts of America—Chicago Council

Camp Reservation Application

Season 1927

Date.....1927

I wish to enroll my son (full name).....

of Troop.....for the (check) 1st ☐, 2nd ☐, 3rd ☐, 4th ☐. 5th ☐ period. (If for more than one period, please indicate.)

Signature of parent.....

Parent's address..... Telephone.....

Approved by Scoutmaster.....

File this application at Headquarters with a $1.00 deposit. If for any reason this application cannot be accepted, your deposit will be returned. Once accepted and reservation made, the deposit cannot be refunded.

Payment of the balance of the registration fee must be made not less than three days in advance of leaving for camp. No payments at the dock. All checks to be made out to Boy Scouts of America.

FEES

Fee for two week period, $15.00, including transportation; $7.50 for each additional week; $8.80 for one week only.

PERIODS

First—June 27th to July 9th
Second—July 11th to July 23rd
Third—July 25th to August 6th
Fourth—August 8th to August 20th
Fifth—August 22nd to September 3rd

REFUNDS

Since a place is reserved for every applicant and the camp makes preparations for a definite stay, refunds of fees are not made under any condition; except where a boy becomes sick and returns home, or is called home because of conditions beyond his control such as illness, death, etc.

BAGGAGE

Every precaution is taken with baggage but the camp will not be responsible for loss or damage of baggage. For those unwilling to have baggage handled under the above conditions we advise expressing several days in advance of departure, addressed to the Scout in care of the Owasippe Scout Camps, Whitehall, Michigan.

CANCELLATIONS

Changes in periods or cancellations must be made at least one week in advance of period reserved. In no event will the registration fee be returned.

RETURN BETWEEN PERIODS

Scouts staying more than one period are requested not to return to Chicago between periods unless absolutely necessary in order that the transportation facilities will not be taxed. Written or wired permission of parents is necessary before such week end trips can be made.

(All information requested must be supplied. See reverse side.)

SUMMER CAMPS

CHICAGO COUNCIL, BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA

9 West Washington Street—State 3990

OWASIPPE SCOUT CAMPS (Near Whitehall, Michigan)

THE REGULAR CAMPS—for all Chicago Boy Scouts—at Crystal Lake

CAMP DAN BEARD
For Scouts from North Side of Chicago.

CAMP McDONALD
For Scouts from Northwest, West and Southwest sections of Chicago.

CAMP WEST
For Scouts from South Side of Chicago.

CAMP BELNAP
For Douglas Division Scouts—third period only.

WILDERNESS TROOP CAMP AND SEA SCOUT PERIOD
at Big Blue Lake
(See Announcement Below)

THE PERIODS

1st Period—Thursday, June 29 to Saturday, July 8—10 days	$ 9.00
2nd Period—Monday, July 10 to Saturday, July 22—13 days	11.00
3rd Period—Monday, July 24 to Wednesday, Aug. 2—10 days	9.00
4th Period—Thursday, Aug. 3 to Saturday, Aug. 12—10 days	9.00

Plus $1.00 for periods not with home troop.

Transportation to Owasippe—$3.50 round trip—Pere Marquette Railway.

A WILDERNESS TROOP CAMP at Big Blue Lake—First three Owasippe periods only.

Providing a ten-day experience for a limited number of hardy, qualified troops who want a rugged experience wherein they will cook their own meals and administer most of their own program. The Owasippe Scout Camps will provide aquatic leadership, and will supervise the camp program, safety and health. The Camp also furnishes tents, cots, cooking and eating utensils and other quartermaster equipment, and supplies the necessary uncooked food.

Board rate for ten days, $6.00; thirteen days, $7.80

SEA SCOUT PERIOD—At Big Blue Lake—Fourth Owasippe period only.

For Sea Scouts and Scouts fifteen years of age and older who are interested in Sea Scouting or Seamanship Merit Badge.

Board rate—$10.00 for ten days.

FOREST PRESERVE CAMPS—Near Chicago

CAMP KIWANIS SOUTH will again be operated for troops for five day periods (Monday to Friday) beginning June 26th and every week until the week ending August 19th. Possibly additional period August 28th to September 2nd.

Rate—$3.50 for five days. Transportation to be arranged by troop.

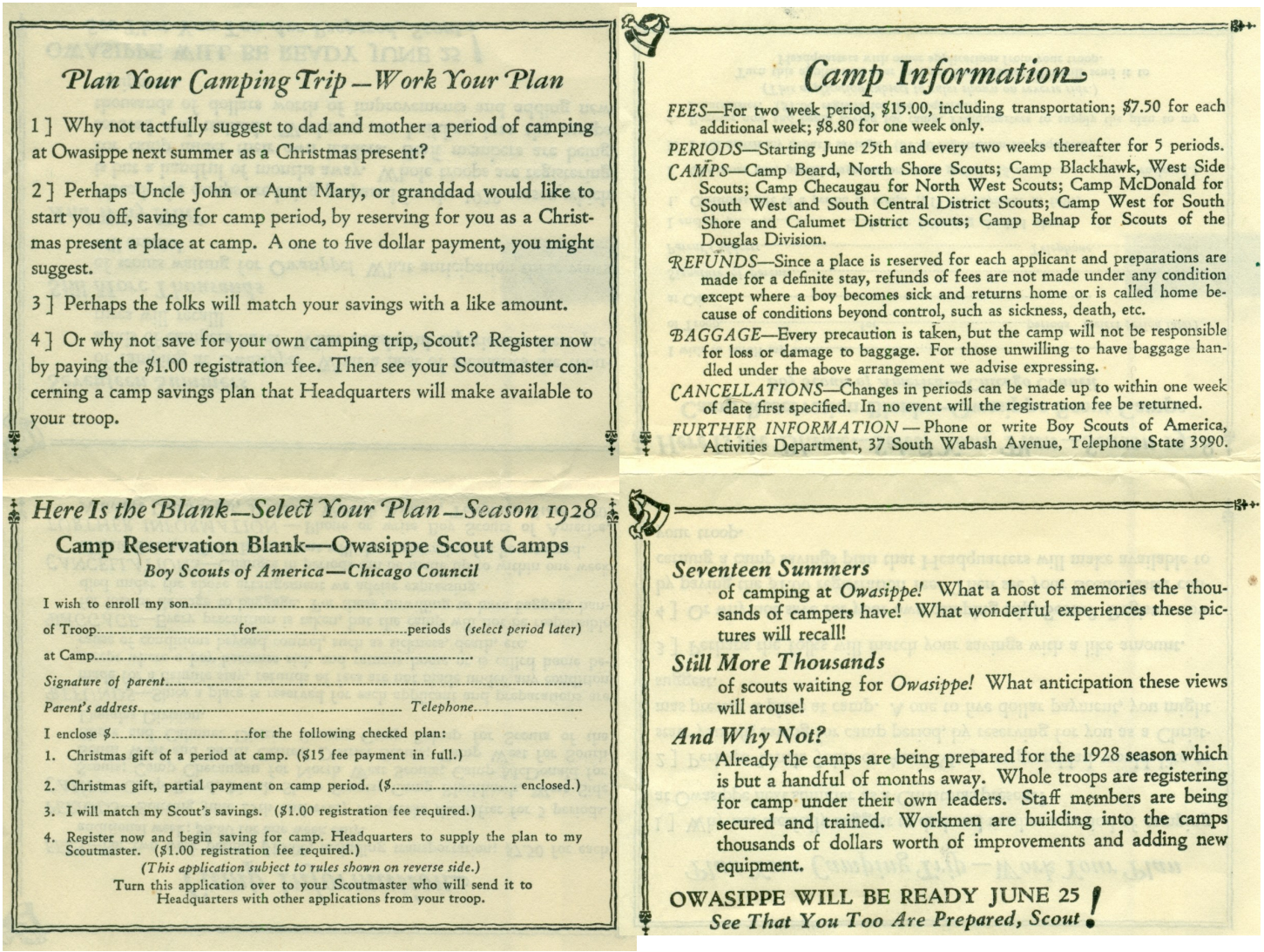
Another similar camp for troop use may be run in the Forest Preserves north of Chicago. Later announcement depends on interest manifested. The same rate and plan as above would apply.

CAMP APPLICATIONS ARE NOW READY AT HEADQUARTERS

Scouting Magazine 7/1/1913

Chicago Camp Ideal The splendid camp purchased and equipped by the Chicago board of Trade for the Scouts of that city is described in a prospectus full of alluring statements. A dining halls seats 200 boys at a time and professional cooks will provide the meals. An ice house and cooling room "means well kept provisions,-also ice cream". A camera club dark room will accommodate ten boys at once, while another ten can be busy with the wood working tools at the manual training shop. Nature study will be held outdoors and in, with a compound microscope for the latter work.

The boys will have every encouragement to advance their scout grades, including a special camp Court of Honor. Woodcraft will be taught by competent instructors. There are splendid swimming advantages, with a roped enclosure for beginners, under adult instruction, and a pier, float and diving tower for the experienced. Life guards will patrol in boats. Even a well equipped store is provided though the note is added "unnecessary expenditures are discouraged". All in all, Chicago is to be congratulated upon the prospect of having a model boy scout camp.



Plan Your Camping Trip—Work Your Plan

1] Why not tactfully suggest to dad and mother a period of camping at Owasippe next summer as a Christmas present?

2] Perhaps Uncle John or Aunt Mary, or granddad would like to start you off, saving for camp period, by reserving for you as a Christmas present a place at camp. A one to five dollar payment, you might suggest.

3] Perhaps the folks will match your savings with a like amount.

4] Or why not save for your own camping trip, Scout? Register now by paying the $1.00 registration fee. Then see your Scoutmaster concerning a camp savings plan that Headquarters will make available to your troop.

Camp Information

FEES—For two week period, $15.00, including transportation; $7.50 for each additional week; $8.80 for one week only.

PERIODS—Starting June 25th and every two weeks thereafter for 5 periods.

CAMPS—Camp Beard, North Shore Scouts; Camp Blackhawk, West Side Scouts; Camp Checaugau for North West Scouts; Camp McDonald for South West and South Central District Scouts; Camp West for South Shore and Calumet District Scouts; Camp Belnap for Scouts of the Douglas Division.

REFUNDS—Since a place is reserved for each applicant and preparations are made for a definite stay, refunds of fees are not made under any condition except where a boy becomes sick and returns home or is called home because of conditions beyond control, such as sickness, death, etc.

BAGGAGE—Every precaution is taken, but the camp will not be responsible for loss or damage to baggage. For those unwilling to have baggage handled under the above arrangement we advise expressing.

CANCELLATIONS—Changes in periods can be made up to within one week of date first specified. In no event will the registration fee be returned.

FURTHER INFORMATION—Phone or write Boy Scouts of America, Activities Department, 37 South Wabash Avenue, Telephone State 3990.

Here Is the Blank—Select Your Plan—Season 1928

Camp Reservation Blank—Owasippe Scout Camps

Boy Scouts of America—Chicago Council

I wish to enroll my son.....

of Troop.....for.....periods *(select period later)*

at Camp.....

Signature of parent.....

Parent's address..... *Telephone*.....

I enclose $.....for the following checked plan:

1. Christmas gift of a period at camp. ($15 fee payment in full.)
2. Christmas gift, partial payment on camp period. ($..... enclosed.)
3. I will match my Scout's savings. ($1.00 registration fee required.)
4. Register now and begin saving for camp. Headquarters to supply the plan to my Scoutmaster. ($1.00 registration fee required.)

(This application subject to rules shown on reverse side.)

Turn this application over to your Scoutmaster who will send it to Headquarters with other applications from your troop.

Seventeen Summers

of camping at *Owasippe!* What a host of memories the thousands of campers have! What wonderful experiences these pictures will recall!

Still More Thousands

of scouts waiting for *Owasippe!* What anticipation these views will arouse!

And Why Not?

Already the camps are being prepared for the 1928 season which is but a handful of months away. Whole troops are registering for camp under their own leaders. Staff members are being secured and trained. Workmen are building into the camps thousands of dollars worth of improvements and adding new equipment.

OWASIPPE WILL BE READY JUNE 25!

See That You Too Are Prepared, Scout!

This flier was stuffed inside the 1927 Camp manual, promoting camp for 1928. There are a couple of points in it that are interesting. The idea of getting camp money as a Christmas present is amusing, especially asking relatives for assistance. (smart!) The notation "whole troops are registering for camp under their own leaders" seems to indicate that the idea of troop camping is either catching on or being promoted. Yet, the scout is instructed to turn the application over to his Scoutmaster who will send it to headquarters.

Scout! HERE'S YOUR 1943 SUMMER CAMP APPLICATION

CHICAGO COUNCIL
BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA
9 West Washington Street State 3996

Scout ..... Troop No. .....

Address .....

Home Telephone..... Parent's Business Telephone.....

This application is required from each Scout or Sea Scout when making a reservation for Camp. Reservation fee of $2.00 per period for Owasippe or $1.00 per period for Camp Kiwanis must accompany the application. Make checks payable to Chicago Council, Boy Scouts of America. Final camp payment (and Owasippe transportation) and Ration Books must come in *at least one week* prior to opening date of period desired.

CHECK CAMP AND PERIODS DESIRED

OWASIPPE — Near Whitehall, Michigan

	1st Period June 30 to July 14	2nd Period July 14 to July 28	3rd Period July 28 to Aug. 11	4th Period Aug. 11 to Aug. 25
BEARD	( )	( )	( )	( )
STUART	( )	( )	( )	( )
WEST	( )	( )	( )	( )
BELNAP				( )

CAMP KIWANIS, Willow Springs, Ill.

1st Period July 5 to 9	( )	4th Period July 26 to 30	( )	7th Period Aug. 16 to 20	( )
2nd Period July 12 to 16	( )	5th Period Aug. 2 to 6	( )	8th Period Aug. 23 to 27	( )
3rd Period July 19 to 23	( )	6th Period Aug. 9 to 13	( )	9th Period Aug. 30 to Sept. 3	( )

Every Scout MUST have a health examination within a period of THREE DAYS prior to leaving for camp. The health of the campers is protected by the medical staff of the camps. Minor ailments are cared for in the Camp Health Lodge without extra cost. If, in the judgment of the camp, it is desirable to send a boy to a nearby hospital for diagnosis or treatment, the camp reserves the right to send him there, the parents or guardian assuming full responsibility, including payment of costs. Whenever it is possible to do so, parents will be notified before such action is taken. This precaution is taken as an additional measure for the protection and health of campers.

I, THE UNDERSIGNED, HAVE READ THIS APPLICATION, INCLUDING THE NEXT PAGE, AND I DO HEREBY APPROVE SAID APPLICATION AND ACCEPT THE CONDITIONS HEREIN CONTAINED.

Certification of Scout's current registration

by.....
Record Service

.....
Parent or Guardian

Relationship to Scout.....

.....
Scoutmaster's Approval

CAMP UNDERSTANDINGS

Final Instructions to Campers will be furnished when you pay the balance of the camp board fee (due at least one week prior to the opening date of the period).

OWASIPPE SCOUT CAMPS
(Near Whitehall, Michigan)

Transportation $4.90 round trip via Pere Marquette Ry. in addition to Camp Fee.

Camp Fee **$20.50**
Extra periods **23.00**

Rebates will be made at Camp to Scouts who attend on the *Troop Plan*—a savings that will help Scouts with their spending money for home or Camp.

If attending on Troop Plan, Scout will receive a rebate of **$1.00** at camp.

The actual operation and maintenance cost per person is higher than the fee charged. The fee, however, has been kept at what is felt to be the minimum for the best interests of everyone. Therefore, in the case of those boys who stay for more than one period the Camping Committee feels that it is fair that they share a little more of the expense of operation—additional periods will be $23.00—with no reduction for leadership.

CAMP KIWANIS
(Palos Forest Preserve, near Willow Springs, Ill.)

Camp Fee **$5.25**

Rebates made at Camp as follows:

If attending on *Troop Plan*, Scout will receive a rebate of **50c** at camp.

Transportation arranged by individual or Troop.

The reservation fee will not be returned, unless notice of intention to cancel is given in writing to the Camping Service at least one month prior to the opening date of the period. Since a place is reserved for every applicant, and the camp management makes preparation on this basis, refund of board fees (not reservation fee) or changes in periods cannot be made unless notice is given at least one week in advance of beginning of period reserved. Nor shall a rebate be made for unused portion of transportation.

The Camping Committee reserves the right to adjust the camp fees in case of some unforeseen condition, although it is not anticipated that this will be necessary.

You will need the attached application when making your reservation for Camp—bring it, properly filled out and signed. The reservation ($2.00 per period for Owasippe; $1.00 for Kiwanis) is included in the total board rates mentioned above.

Every Scout MUST have a health examination within a period of THREE DAYS prior to leaving for camp. The health of the campers is protected by the medical staff of the camps. Minor ailments are cared for in the Camp Health Lodge without extra cost. If, in the judgment of the camp, it is desirable to send a boy to a nearby hospital for diagnosis or treatment, the camp reserves the right to send him there, the parents or guardian assuming full responsibility, including payment of costs. Whenever it is possible to do so, parents will be notified before such action is taken. This precaution is taken as an additional measure for the protection and health of campers.

Chicago Council — Boy Scouts of America
9 WEST WASHINGTON STREET PHONE STATE 3996

CAMP REGISTRATION PROCEDURE

TROOP REGISTRATION:

Notify your Scoutmaster you would like to go to Camp. He then will make a reservation for the troop at the Camp selected for the period desired—paying a $2.00 reservation fee for each boy going to Camp. A troop reservation card is made available for each unit in the Camp packet mailed to each troop. Troop reservations will be accepted at the Camping and Activities Service beginning with February 1, 1950—and reservations must be made prior to June 1st. (Unit Leaders: Check to see which period your District plans to attend Camp—although you may attend the camp of your choice as well as the period you desire.)

REGISTRATION FEE: $2.00 per person (and applies against the camp fee)

SCOUT REGISTRATION:

Fill in a Scout application blank—check the camp and period desired—and add $2.00—turn in to your Scoutmaster. If your troop is not going, bring or mail to the Camping Service at Boy Scout Headquarters anytime after February 1st and before June 1st. Pay your full Board Fee at least one month prior to Camp—there is no notification sent or given—it is assumed as you know the period and camp you have registered for; you can make the proper payment of the balance without additional notification.

REGISTRATION FEE: $2.00 per person (and applies against your camp fee)

NOTE: If in the opinion of the camp authorities, attendance at any camp for any given period is insufficient to keep the camp open—the camp will be closed and the Scout will be provided accommodation at an adjacent camp of equivalent value. Scouts who choose to return home or not attend will be given the minimum refund of their Board Fee. Note the Board Fee refund schedule on the Camp application.

YOUR DISTRICT GOES TO OWASIPPE

CAMP	1st Period	2nd Period	3rd Period	4th Period
BEARD	Trailblazer Lakeview	Arrowhead	Indian Boundary	Portage Iroquois
STUART	Stock Yard Tri Ridge	Northwest Burr Oak	Northwest Northwest	South Town South West
WEST	South Shore	Greater Roseland	Lake Shore	Calumet
BLACKHAWK	Midwest	South Central	Forest Austin	Cicero

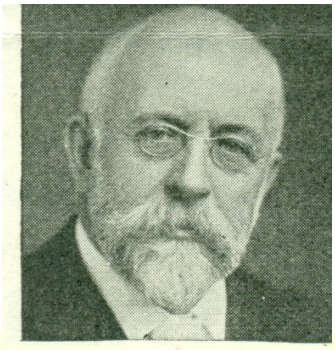
The idea of camps "belonging" to districts had supposedly ended in the late 1930's. Yet, this 1950's camp registration form show the theme very much alive

Trailblazer, Lakeview, Arrowhead, Indian Boundary, Portage and Iroquois had all been part of the old North Shore District that had been camping at Camp Dan Beard since 1912.

Districts camping at West had all been part of the old South Shore District that used Camp West since 1921. The districts at Blackhawk had all been part of the old West Side District.

Troops loved their camps and Chicago Council seems to have recognized these allegiances.

Owasippe the Camp
And other Chicago Council Camps
The Early Years 1912-1961



The A. STAMFORD WHITE
OWASIPPE SCOUT CAMPS, Inc.
OPENS JULY 1st
1,000 Acres of Wilderness

The Camps

Camp Dan Beard	For North Shore District Scouts
*Camp Blackhawk	For West Side District Scouts
*Camp Checaugau	For Northwest District Scouts
*Camp McDonald	For South Central and Southwest District Scouts
Camp James E. West	For South Shore and Calumet District Scouts
*Camp Belnap	For Douglas Division Scouts

Paul E. Myers, Jr.
Goshen, Indiana

About this book

This book is not authorized or approved by the Chicago Area Council or the Boy Scouts of America. The opinions expressed are solely those of the author.

I have worked on this booklet for over 15 years. Friends contacted me in 2010, urging me to complete "something" for the 2011 anniversary of Owasippe. Because I was unable to access documents that would allow me to complete the story to my satisfaction, I delayed.

In the summer of 2011, I finally discovered who R. Douglas Stuart was. In November of 2011 Ron Kulak sent an obituary of A. Stamford White, that allowed me to properly identify him as the President of the Chicago Board of Trade. I still lack information on the White River canoe trips and I can not include a map of Camp Dan Beard, despite the fact that one exists but with no additional information coming, its time to publish.

In a book like this, the reader will usually look to the section about their camp and see if I've captured any memories of their experience. Most will be disappointed, because this booklet about Owasippe is from a time that no one will remember. The photo studio and woodshop are long gone. There were no baseball diamonds or tennis courts at the Owasippe I knew. The modern camps don't have camp songs. Individual camp experiences can be so different. A full service campers from Blackhawk, Beard, Stuart or West will know nothing of Hiawatha Beach or Wilderness and vice versa. I never sat foot at any of the Crystal Lake camps, never saw the famous blockhouse at Camp Stuart and despite the fact we camped on Big Blue Lake for years I don't recall ever being in the Camp Blackhawk dining hall. We took canoe trips but we never hiked any of the Owasippe trails. We made a yearly trip to the eerie scene at the bottom of Paradise Valley just around the corner from Camp Hiawatha Beach but most Blackhawk campers probably never hiked around Big Blue Lake to this unique experience. Veteran Owasippe campers probably missed a large part of what Owasippe was, I hope that this book will show you things about our camps that you didn't know.

When this was first published I printed 250 copies and donated them t the Owasipe Staff Association. They sold them and kept the money to support their work at Owasippe.

August 2025. he book has been out of print for several years. I continually get calls from people wanting one. I found the original printing file and my business just recently bought a high speed color printed. THIS is the result of that. In many ways its better than the original. First color printing and the pages got jumbled up by the printer and this is a more readable version.

IF THERE INFORMATION HEREIN THAT YOU WANT, MAKE COPIES USE IT THERE ARE NO COPYRIGHTS.

Forward

In 1998, I developed a pamphlet which was to be a warm up for the larger project of writing the story of scouting in Chicago. Over the years, I've realized that the best way to proceed is by breaking the subject down into manageable parts. At this time, I've developed the story of Owasippe the Camp and Owasippe the Lodge.

I discovered that in the early years, most scouts did not attend camp with home unit leadership; scouts camped by district and the camps were district camps. Research into the districts was needed and an explanation of districts became necessary. I discovered that the original camp on Crystal Lake was for the North Shore District and that raised the question of where other early districts camped. Modern scouters have never heard of Camp Keesus, Shabbona, Ken Jockety, Wabash or Yotanka, so even though the booklet is about Owasippe, I included information on these camps as well as later district camps.

Understanding Owasippe was like putting a complicated jig saw puzzle together. You can't proceed until you've got other parts of the puzzle. There were so many ways to get things wrong. There were different Camp Pioneers and the camps have nothing to do with the work crews called Pioneers. No one realized that Camp Blackhawk was named Pioneer for a few years. Camps named Wilderness and Pioneer moved from the north side of Big Blue Lake to the south side and Pioneer later moved north again. The boundaries of the 1935 districts are unknown to modern scouters. The geographic descriptions seem clear enough; South Shore, South West, West Side, North West, North Shore. It would appear that the North West District was probably the area on the northwest side of the city; the Norwood Park or Edison neighborhoods. When I discovered a map (page 78) I realized that the North West District was actually north of the West District in the Albany Park, Lakeview, Logan Square and Irving Park neighborhoods. Assumptions that I had developed about the Northwest Suburban Council growing out of the North West District had been wrong. But, the mistake would have been an easy one to make.

I would have liked to have told the whole Owasippe Story, 1912-2012 but the research material was just not available. I hope that someone will pick up where I've left off and develop the story of the later years.

I regret that a project of this type wasn't started years ago. Unfortunately, there is no depository for historic information about camp or for that matter Scouting in Chicago. The usual sources, Scout Headquarters, the Chicago Public Library, Chicago Historical Society and elsewhere just didn't have any useful information. I couldn't accept the fact that the Chicago Historical Society didn't have anything. It was my belief that a treasure trove of information should exist at the Owasippe Museum. Dozens of individuals told me they gave memorabilia to Owasippe, but

OWASIPPE

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